CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

The Beaver

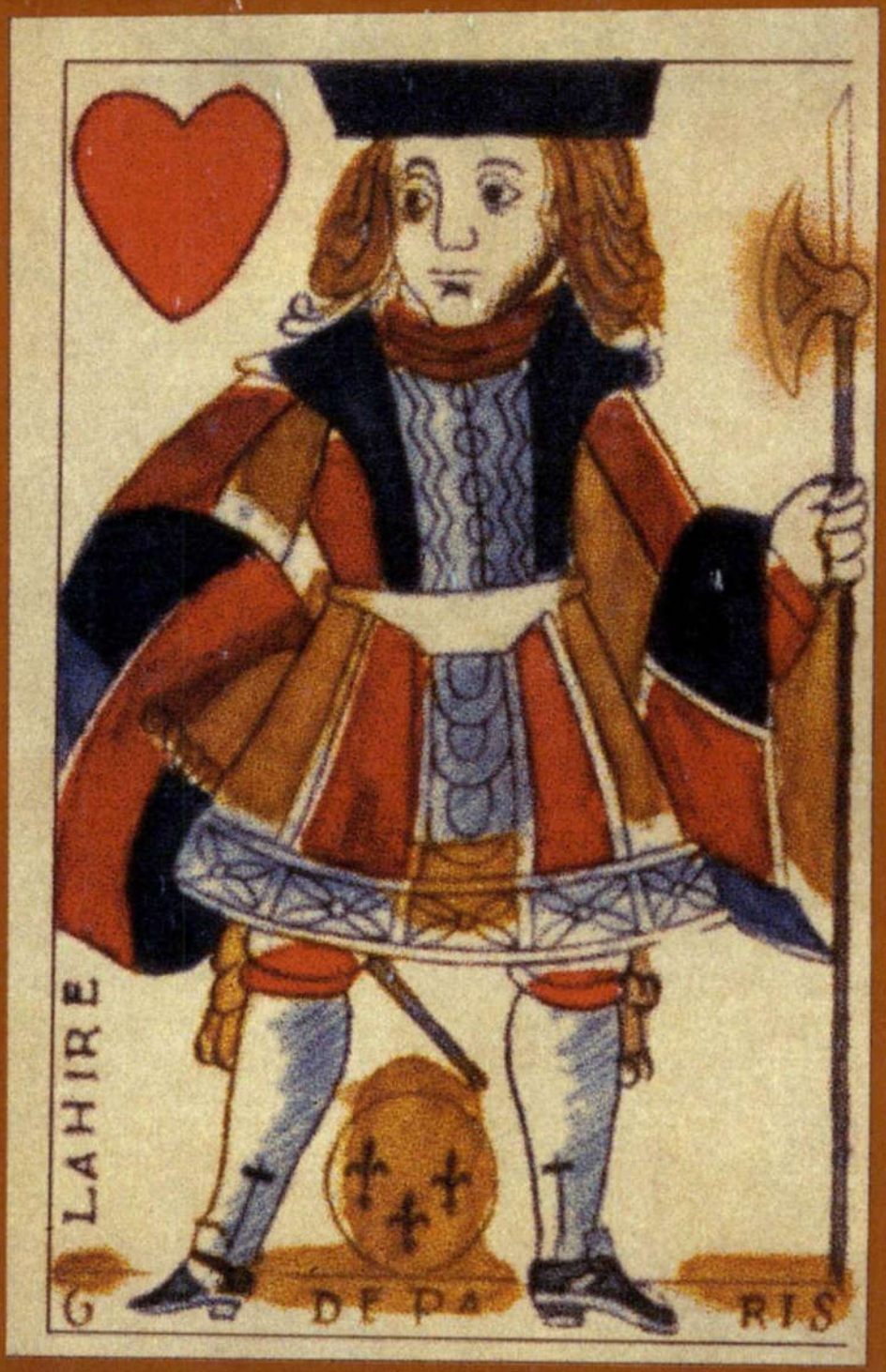
AUGUST | SEPTEMBER 2000 $4.95

Arctic Enigma: *Searching for James Knight*

Recalling "Bible Bill"

Wolfe & Montcalm Meet Again

Old Money Paying with Playing Cards



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The Beaver

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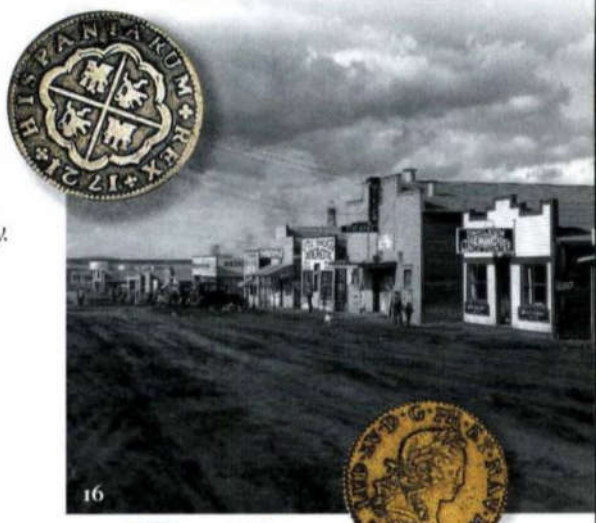
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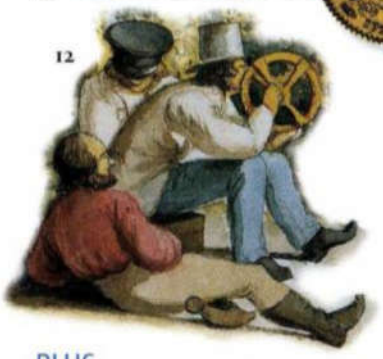
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On the cover: Fifty *livres* card money, 1714. Photo courtesy the National Archives of Canada.

Letters

The *Beaver* welcomes readers' comments. E-mail us at <cnhs@historysociety.ca> or write to *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 0T6. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

Innovator's images sought

I RECENTLY HAD the opportunity to view many glass plate negatives of John Connon's work, which are in the collection of the Dufferin County Museum and Archives. Charles Long's article ["In the Round," April/May 2000] makes me appreciate even more the contributions made by Connon. As an innovator in the field of photography and a superb chronicler of local history, Connon has left us with a legacy that is often overlooked. I am particularly interested in finding any photos he may have taken of the interior of David Boyle's school museum in Elora. Any readers aware of such resources can contact me at <John.Carter @mczcr.gov.on.ca>.

John Carter
Museum Advisor,
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation
Toronto, Ontario

Connon concerns

IN REFERENCE TO THE BEGINNINGS of photography ["In The Round" April/May 2000], Charles Long neglected to mention Joseph-Nicephore Niepce of France. He made the world's first permanent image in 1827 and then began a collaboration with Daguerre to improve the process. He had died by the time Daguerre made his historic announcement.

As well, Otto Holtermann's panorama of Sydney Harbour is described as consisting of three pieces of glass negative, each measuring "three by five inches, and weighing sixty pounds." That seems an impossible weight for such a small piece of glass. Is it possible that the correct measurements were intended to be in metres or feet?

George Dunbar
Toronto, Ontario

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Mr. Dunbar is correct. The glass negatives measure three feet by five feet (.9 meters by 1.5 meters).

Not the hole story

RE: "GHOST TOWN," April/May 2000: Ore bodies become exhausted as they are mined. Yes, mining by open pit leaves holes in the ground. It also leaves trained individuals more able to face the demands of the modern world. It leaves infrastructure which benefits all residents. It also produces wages, taxes, royalties, and business opportunities. Northerners need to debate the relative benefits and costs of such development, but they need to do it in the context of facts, not the one-sided pseudo-history promulgated in this article.

Mike Vaydik
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

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A different view

HAVING WORKED A COUPLE OF SUMMERS at Pine Point, I hoped your writers might inflame readers with the pioneering, community-spirited camaradie that made the place so unique and so Canadian ["Ghost Town," April/May 2000].

Many evenings we spent working the ore train, our sole reason being to get a few minutes more of overtime swinging fourteen-pound hammers against five foot and up boulders. How about Dolly, the native Canadian, who was empowered to single-handedly maintain the claims for the company? The native Canadian chief who with his band would come in and ensure the returned rail cars were free of debris? Your writers allude to there being no native workers, yet the truth is quite different.

Environment destruction was not unknown, and when I surveyed the tailings area, it was obvious what was happening was wrong. I took pictures and sent them to my MPP in Edmonton; his response was "the company was meeting all obligations." Yet one of those obligations was to refill all the pits with waste from the milling process.

The native peoples from Fort Resolution claimed a prejudice that did not exist, and the writers alluded to an environmental catastrophe that was not ignored.

D. W. (Del) Fontaine, Hamilton, Ontario

More on the Ancaster Eight

I READ DENNIS DUFFY'S ARTICLE on the Ancaster Eight [June/July 2000] with interest. The comparison with Riel and eleven others in 1885 is a bit of a stretch. More apt a comparison is with the twenty men hanged after the rebellion and during the patriot invasions from the U.S. in 1838–1839. John Beverley Robinson's restraint as acting attorney general in 1814 was not matched by his actions as chief justice in 1838; resorting to court-martial of civilians at a time when the regular courts could still function was repressive indeed. There is suggestion that the Ancaster Eight had their heads severed after hanging (E.E. and L.R. Gray, *Wilderness Christians*, Toronto: Macmillan, 1956, p.254) in partial adoption of the grisly traditional punishment for treason. For further insight into wartime tensions between the authorities, other security measures, the selection of Ancaster for the trials, and the mitigating circumstances that resulted in the Crown granting mercy to the other men convicted of treason, reference can be made to P. Romney and B. Wright, "State Trials and Security Proceedings in Upper Canada During the War of 1812" in F.M. Greenwood and B. Wright eds., Canadian State Trials, Volume One: *Law, Politics and Security Measures, 1608-1837* (Toronto: Osgoode Society / University of Toronto Press, 1996), p.379.

Barry Wright, Ottawa, Ontario

Some honourable gentlemen . . . and ladies

IN COMMENTING ON MY BOOK *Bastards & Boneheads* [Booknotes: June/July 2000], Chris Raible states that I think no Canadian leaders are "admirable." Mr. Raible is wrong, and he would know this if he had bothered to read even a few chapters of the book. Throughout *Bastards & Boneheads*, I express my admiration for many of Canada's leaders, whether political, military or social. Here is just a partial list:

John A. Macdonald, "our greatest prime minister . . . a true nation-builder." Robert Borden, "a strong leader in an age of upheaval, a good man in a bad time." Tecumseh, "a remarkable diplomat and a gifted orator." Charles de Salaberry, "an inspired leader." Robert Baldwin, "a man ahead of his time." Louis LaFontaine, "greatly undervalued . . . a winner." William Van Horne, "a true renaissance man." Emily Murphy, "a respected figure, at once firm and fair." Agnes Macphail, "well-informed, forceful, funny . . ."

True, I also take a harsh look at such figures as Charles Lawrence, Duncan Campbell Scott, Frederick Blair, and Brian Mulroney. But nowhere do I write of Canadian leaders: "nobody is admirable." Quite the opposite. The book was designed to be a raucous celebration of the role personality has played throughout Canadian history.

It is clear that Mr. Raible read only the first two or three pages – at most. Or perhaps only the back-cover copy and nothing more. (Certainly, what little he does refer to could have been lifted straight from the back cover.) Either way, it is rather shoddy and unprofessional to pass judgment on a work without ever having read it, don't you think?

Will Ferguson Calgary, Alberta

ERRATUM

We thank Mr. Ferguson for pointing out an error on page 81, February/March 2000. In the article "Joining Forces," we identify the Mohawk Warrior confronting soldier Patrick Cloutier as Ronald Cross. The Warrior in the photo is actually Brad Larocque, an Ojibwa student from Saskatchewan (source: *People of the Pines*, Pindera & York, page 354–55).

Wrong on *Roch*

IN THE JUNE/JULY ISSUE, pg. 5, under the heading "Celebrating Northern Grit," the contributor had many facts wrong concerning the famous transits of the Northwest Passage by the RCMP schooner *St.Roch*.

First, the first successful transit of the Northwest Passage was made in 1903–1906 when Roald Amundsen brought the schooner *Gjoa* through from east to west. It was to be thirty-four years before the *St. Roch* would succeed in such a transit; it was the *second* ship to make a successful transit, but the *first* ship to make the passage from west to east, which she did in 1940–1942.

Second, the *St. Roch* did not return to the west coast via the Panama Canal but made her second transit of the Northwest Passage back to Vancouver, sailing westbound in 1944. Thus she became the *second* ship (after *Gjoa* again), to make the westbound passage, but the *first* vessel to negotiate the Northwest Passage in both directions.

Finally, the *St. Roch* returned from the west coast to the east coast of Canada via the Panama Canal in 1950, thereby becoming the first vessel to circumnavigate North America, but it was not a continuous voyage as your article seems to imply, having been done over a period of six years with regular service voyages in the Canadian North after her westbound transit in 1944.

It is also worth noting that *St. Roch* was the first vessel to sail through the Northwest Passage in either direction in a single season (1944), taking eighty-six days on the passage, while the only two previous transits by Amundsen and Larsen had required wintering over en route.

Patrick R.M. Toomey,Captain, Canadian Coast Guard (Retired) Kingston, Ontario

Currents

Get real

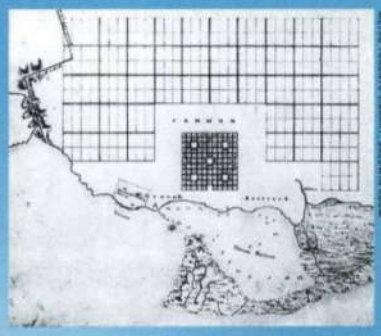
The word "biffy," we are told, is of Canadian origin, a corruption, perhaps of the word "privy" – an outdoor toilet. We bring this up (hope you're not eating breakfast while reading this) because it was the first thing to pop into our heads when we learned that two couples, Tim and Deanna Treadway of Kenora, Ontario, and Frank and Alana Logie of Fergus, Ontario, at the behest of History Television and the Life Network, have signed up to spend the year replicating the life of turn-of-the-(last)-century homesteaders on a patch of the bald Canadian prairie with not a mod con in sight. At some moment, on a minus 40° January eve, one of our heroes will feel the urge, and the plumbing, you can rest assured, will not be en suite. It will be out the back door, ten metres away. *Shiver!*

The program, which is scheduled to air as a thirteen-part series beginning in October, is called *Pioneer Quest: A Year in the Real West*, the latest wrinkle in what we like to call *schadenfreude* TV, but is more popularly known as reality TV, in which courageous or foolhardy (your choice) people engage in some rugged adventure under the cyclops eye of a camera, for fame, glory, money, and the chance to give us schlubs eating pork rinds in our Barcaloungers a vicarious thrill. The two couples, who were chosen from a thousand applicants, must endure life in a self-built shelter *sans* electricity, central heat, pizza delivery, and roll-on deodorant. If they can get through a year growing their own crops, killing their own chickens, and not killing each other, each couple will receive $100,000. Can they endure? Distance lends the past enchantment, abetted by the Disneyfying tendencies of movies and television programs. But from time to time we receive photos from *Beaver* readers that depict rural prairie life around 1900. Though often formal in pose (as if some itinerant photographer made his living snapping these good folks), the lined faces, spartan clothing, and arid landscape hint at the real hardship involved. A hundred years ago, half of all Canadians were engaged in agriculture. Today fewer than three percent work on the land. The great toil involved may be one of the reasons why.

COURTESY OF LORA WILLS

Toronto on the tube

It is the capital of Ontario, but better known to many of us (enviously, dismissively, ironically, affectionately) as the Centre of the Universe. It is Toronto, of course. And now, it is more than a 3-million-plus megapolis, home to Bay Street and Blue Jays; it is a three-part television series. Scheduled to air on CTV September 5, 12, and 19, *Toronto: City of Dreams* examines the history of the city we love to hate, from its precontact days as a native settlement, through its colonial period as muddy York, to its apotheosis as Toronto the Good, and, finally, to today's cosmopolitan metroplex that has played a strong role in shaping the nation and reflecting its ideals. Along the way, viewers will be treated to reenactments, historic documents, archival footage, photographs, silent films, radio broadcasts, and newsreel footage spliced into a seamless narrative that focuses on personal portraits and stories as the passage into what is otherwise a complex history. If you saw Ric Burns's five-part, ten-hour series *New York: A Documentary Film* on PBS last fall, you will have some idea of the style and scope of the Toronto production. And should *Toronto: City of Dreams* be well received, there is the chance, says White Pines Pictures, producers of the series, of other Canadian centres receiving the same film treatment. Why, we here in Winnipeg, the Chicago of the North, the fastest growing city in North America in 1910, home of the 1919 General Strike, the *Beaver* editorial offices, and at least two floods-of-the-century, are ready for *our* close-up now, Mr. DeMille.



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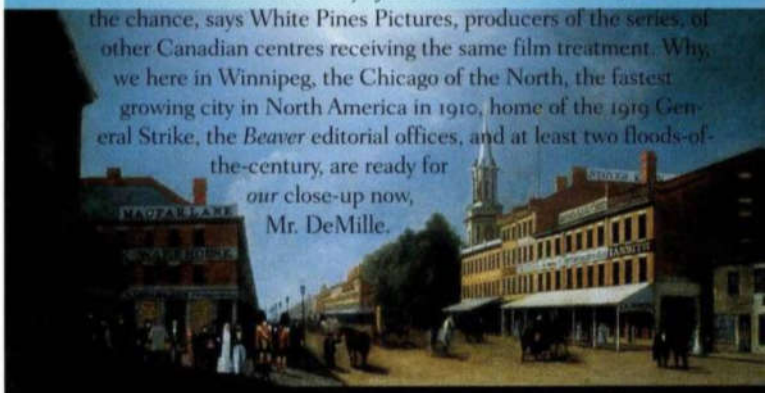
First plan of Toronto harbour, 1788



View of King Street, Toronto, 1843–1844, by John Gillespie

Foreign affairs to savour

Notice that a website created by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade crossed our desk recently. We poked at it with a stick for a while. Would it be impossibly dull, like, say, a fifteen-hundred-page guide to the GST or a preliminary report on effluence treatment in Lake St. Clair? After all, we reasoned, it's been created by a *government department*! But it turns out we were suffering from a bout of prejudgment. We put down the stick, logged onto <**www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/hist**>, and found – *miribile dictu* – the website was interesting and useful. Indeed, the Canada and the World section is as good a popular summary as we've seen of the nation's relationship, from 1867 on, to friends and foes through war and peace. There's a comprehensive section on the early Cold War, for aficionados of such midcentury shenanigans, and if you like departmental history, there are documents! documents! documents! – declassified, and recounting such curious quarrels as the shape of tables during peace negotiations. Fascinating stuff.

Happy trails to you

This month's issue of the *Beaver* features a story on five Canadians who walked from coast to coast in 1921 (see "The Great Canadian Foot Race," page 30), but as of September, you, too, may walk the length of this fair land, only you won't have to compete with cars and trains like our 1921 heroes. The cross-country perambulation of 2000 and beyond features a designated trail, called – aptly – the Trans Canada Trail, comprised of 16,000 kilometres of existing trails, abandoned rail corridors, and newly devised paths knitted together into one continuous route that stretches from St. John's, Newfoundland to Victoria, B.C., with a branch travelling north to Tuktoyaktuk, Yukon. En route one could stop off and cool one's heels at any of a number of nearby historically significant sites.

Its origins in projects designed for Canada's 125th anniversary celebrations in 1992, the trail will accommodate (besides walking) cycling, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling, making it the longest shared-use recreational trail in the world. To inaugurate it, a whole bunch of relayers, which began at the coasts eight months ago, will converge on Ottawa September 9 carrying with them water from the three oceans that will be poured into a newly constructed commemorative fountain. Not quite pounding in a golden spike at Craigellachie, but close enough.

Getting into Michif

It is no surprise perhaps that a hybrid people would produce a hybrid language. The Métis of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the northern plains states of the U.S., the descendants of French traders and trappers and Cree women, once spoke a language called Michif, a blend of French and Cree languages. As Margaret Desjarlais explains its genesis: *La Sauvagesse namôya kaskihtaw en français takitotât ses enfants. Le Français namoya kaskihtâw ses enfants ta-kitotât en cri. En français êkwa kitotêw. Ekwa quelques les deux kiskinohamahk kikwây. Ohci pikiskwêw rien que en cri ekwa en français.* (The Indian woman couldn't speak French to their children. The Frenchman couldn't speak Cree. So he spoke to his children in French. Some of them learned to speak French and Cree. Therefore, they spoke only mixed French and Cree.)

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Michif flourished, but as the twentieth century progressed and the West filled with new populations, many of whom either spoke or readily adapted to English, the use of Michif declined. Experts estimate fewer than a thousand people can speak the language to any degree today, and linguists have warned that Michif may well join Aramaic, Pictish, Etruscan, Manx, and dozens more in the great graveyard of tongues unless something is done to encourage its use. As it happens, that is now occurring in various ways. According to the Manitoba Métis Federation, the first comprehensive scholarly Michif dictionary is under development at the University of Toronto. Meanwhile, the federation is scheduled to begin language courses in Winnipeg and other parts of Manitoba comparable to the Michif courses that have been offered in North Dakota in recent years. Reviving the language, it is hoped, will help strengthen Métis culture.

Website of the month

For those who prefer to get their historical stimulation visually, Canadian National Railways has donated its extensive – and we do mean extensive (over a million items!) – photo collection to the Canada Science and Technology Museum, which has put a representative portion on its website at <www.science-tech.nmstc.ca>. This new virtual gallery, which will grow over the next five years as more pictures are added, shows not only CN's pioneering role in transportation and communications, but Canada's growth and development over 150 years from settling the west, to going to war, to building our cities. Snaps even include such moments as Bing Crosby amusing a bear at Jasper Park Lodge.

In the frame

Night Target, Germany, by Miller Brittain

Canvas of War, an exhibit of seventy-two war paintings by some of Canada's finest artists, which is so big it had to travel from the (tiny, comparatively) Canadian War Museum in Ottawa to the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, will have continued life after its January 7 closing. If you live in the following cities – Toronto, Fredericton, Winnipeg, Halifax, Calgary, Montreal, and Vancouver – you, too, will be able to view this impressive collection sometime in 2001, 2002, or 2003. The seventy-two paintings, some of them by members of the Group of Seven, represent only a tiny fraction culled from the more than thirteen thousand works of art managed by the Canadian War Museum (many of which, given the war museum's limited space, are housed in an Ottawa warehouse). Though the war museum has a program of travelling exhibitions and loans, rarely has so comprehensive and distinguished a display of Canadian war art been mounted for public viewing. The development of Canadian art as a whole owes much to the war art program developed in the Great War, for it was in the trenches of France that Canadian painters broke from colonial sensibilities and found their own artistic voice. The Second World War continued the tradition of recording on canvas the experience of Canadians in international conflict. More war, more art, it seems. But since the Canadian War Museum is scheduled to get splendiferous new digs by 2004, eventually there will be more room.

Crisis Down on the Farm

Who could have known how fundamentally [John A. Macdonald's National Policy] would shape the region's development, arguably forming the foundation for the house of cards that is tumbling down today?

Have you heard the joke about what one bison said to the other as they grazed along an abandoned railway track? "So sad. There used to be so many of them." It's a satirically poignant summary of the economic and environmental forces converging on Prairie agriculture. In a curious turn of events, railway branch lines are becoming extinct and the bison are coming back – albeit domesticated as a diversification venture.

By some measures, Canadian agriculture is doing well. Agri-food exports have quadrupled since the early 1970s. Gross farm receipts have increased six-fold over the same time period. But while the wealth generated by the sector has climbed steadily, farmers' profits have followed a flat or declining line. Farming is in crisis. Producers are leaving land their families have farmed for generations. Small communities are wasting away. Nowhere is this phenomenon more visible or its impact more acute than on the Canadian Prairies.

It seems as though much of what has been put together over the past century is now being torn apart, whether it is the wooden grain elevators that have served as a cultural icon or the cooperative spirit that built them. What is happening out there in the rural fields and villages of Canada is about more than low commodity prices, crop failures, or unsatisfactory international trade agreements. Canadian agriculture is in the throes of a massive economic restructuring as it rationalizes, industrializes, and deregulates to compete in a global economy.

It is a painful transition, one that is rewriting the very definition of what it means to be a farmer in Canada.

Historically, the industry was dominated by a "gate-to-plate" psyche. The farmer, as a primary producer, had considerable status in society as an engine of economic growth. Government policies were designed with the underlying assumption that stabilizing farmers balanced the whole economy. It was true. Up until the 1930s, farming was a way of life for one in three Canadians. The bleak prairie landscape provided early settlers little by way of lumber or nails for houses or fuel for the long, harsh winters. What the land could do, however, was produce lots of wheat, which paid for importing these items.

These agricultural producers were, and still are, voracious consumers. Even today, Canada's impressive agricultural export capacity relies heavily on imported inputs, such as fertilizers, pesticides, and genetics. However, farming's ever-increasing dependence on production aids has eroded the farmer's place in society as a primary producer. Today's industry operates under a "petri-dish-to-plate" principle that relegates farmers to being one link in a long, industrialized supply chain.

This change is pivotal to understanding the federal government's shift over the past two decades away from producer-focused agricultural policies to a total-industry view.

It is politically expedient to blame foreign governments and the subsidies they pay to keep their own farmers in business for the upheaval. It is also tempting to view farmers as hapless victims, forced into modern serfdom by circumstances beyond their control. Neither portrayal is accurate.

Over the past century, farmers have eagerly embraced technological advances, which increased costs of operation but also improved productivity. Until recently, higher productivity could be directly correlated with better incomes, especially when market access was subsidized by cheap freight rates. However, better efficiency also meant farm sizes could grow – to the detriment of rural communities.

People are the foundation of an economy, but Canada lacks the population to consume its natural resources and productivity. At 43 per cent, exports as a proportion of Canada's GDP are currently among the highest in the industrialized world.

In 1897, in the context of John A. Macdonald's National Policy to encourage east-west trade within Canada, it made perfect sense for the federal government to offer subsidies, mineral rights, and land to encourage the CPR's completion of a railway through the Crowsnest Pass. In ex-

change, the railway agreed to freeze freight rates on wheat heading east and on manufactured goods moving west.

At the time, it was seen as a victory for farmers who had begun their pursuit of global markets with the first shipment of Red Fife wheat out of Manitoba in 1876. Who could have known how fundamentally that policy would shape the region's development, arguably forming the foundation for the house of cards that is tumbling down today?

The Crow's Nest Pass Agreement and ensuing transportation policy encouraged a focus on exported agricultural commodities for processing

elsewhere. Farmers formed collectives, such as the prairie grain co-operatives and the Canadian Wheat Board, to achieve market power, recognizing that their isolation made it difficult to protect their interests in faraway markets. Production increased exponentially as mechanization replaced men and horses in the fields. Exports grew too, to the point where the railways began questioning in the late 1960s whether their earlier agreement to keep a lid on freight rates deserved a second look. Their declining commitment to moving grain launched a review process that ultimately ended the historic Crow agreement in 1983.

The debates surrounding transportation policy exposed an inherent conflict of interest between farmers and the grain companies they owned, a flaw that ultimately saw the unified farmers' voice splintered into a cacophony of commodity-based coalitions.

In the early 1980s, the federal government began directly subsidizing the railways for approximately two-thirds of what it cost to haul farmers' grain. This became the subject of another vociferous and divisive debate. Should the $700 million subsidy go to the railways, which meant it would continue to be applied to shipments off the Prairies? This angered trading partners who viewed it as an export subsidy.

Or should it go directly to farmers? The pay-the-producer concept was vigorously opposed by farmers outside the region, who argued it would then become a production subsidy that some received, but others didn't. It all became moot in 1995 when Finance Minister Paul Martin axed the Crow entirely as part of the federal deficit-reduction effort. Suddenly, prairie farmers were subjected to the full cost of accessing export markets for the first time in nearly a century.

This exposed another flaw in western agriculture's foundation. The export focus of the past century pushed marginal land into annual crop production and encouraged a narrow range of crops. This has proven to be an expensive way to farm. Monocultural cropping practices work well on large farms, but they compromise soil fertility and result in more disease and pest problems. These, in turn, require more inputs.

High production costs, combined with the full costs of exporting, have made many grain-based operations unviable. Farmers must find more money; either expand, diversify, or get out.

Yet farm sizes have already grown to the point in Western Canada where the capital cost of financing an intergenerational transfer is prohibitive. Even on a corporate scale, it defies logic to suggest a sector that routinely offers returns of five per cent or less will attract much interest from investors, given the range of alternatives.

Diversification, either through changing the farm operation or finding off-farm work, is difficult too. Value-added processing typically takes place close to major population centres. The policies and trends of the past century have done much to discourage those on the Prairies. And as small towns decline, part-time jobs for farmers disappear.

If you believe the futurists, the vast majority of farmers will go the way of the bison. They'll simply disappear. Those who remain will become a link in a high-input, high-output industrial chain.

But there are some wild cards left in play.

The agronomic challenges facing the sector right now are daunting and many are related to current cultural practices. Weeds are increasingly resistant to commonly used herbicides. Diseases such as fusarium head blight are becoming endemic, which threatens Canada's reputation as a supplier of quality milling and malting grains.

With high-input technology, it is unclear whether further intensification can be sufficiently profitable to outweigh the accompanying financial and environmental risks. Genetic engineering offers hope of another productivity breakthrough, but its impact so far has been to modestly stabilize yield, while at the same time destabilizing markets – public acceptance of this technology is ambivalent at best.

Scientists also say the weather is becoming more volatile, possibly a result of global warming.

The key to addressing these environmental challenges seems to lie in a move towards a more diversified, less volume-oriented production system. This intensifies the need for management, but both costs and risks can be reduced. For example, forage production on grain farms increases soil fertility and helps control weed, disease, and insect cycles. Conservation tillage conserves moisture, which increases the variety of crops farmers can grow.

Which brings us back to the bison. Maybe their story can teach farmers a thing or two about survival.

These majestic, if somewhat ornery critters now raised on ranches thrived for millions of years because they stuck together – so much a part of the landscape that it seemed to early pioneers as though the earth itself was moving. They were self-sufficient, living on what the land and sky provided and relying on their own production system to replace what they used. There's one more thing: letting outside forces decide how much you are worth can be a little hard on one's hide. ◘

Laura Rance has been writing about agriculture and rural issues for Western Canadian publications for nineteen years. She is associate editor of the *Manitoba Co-operator* and a regular business columnist for the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Old M

Canadian currency hasn't always been loonies, toonies, and twenty-dollar bills. Beads, beaver pelts, and playing cards, too, were the coin of the realm before the realm had coin.

by Adrienne Leduc

One day when I was researching the history of my husband's ancestor, Pierre-Charles Leduc, I came across a quill-written notary document dated 1719 describing in antiquated French a land transaction that stipulated the farmland was to be paid for in "card money." Intrigued, I set out to learn more about colonial Canada's trading currencies and found that in its relatively short history Canada has used some rather distinctive, unusual, and, indeed, inventive forms of money, including wampum, beaver pelts, and playing cards.

The Algonquian tribes who lived on the Atlantic coast, and with whom the French first traded, developed the delicate craft of making wampum beads – long cylinders or tubes – from quahog clamshells. Among the northeastern natives, wampum had social, political, and religious significance. Later the tribes used these beads as a medium of exchange and standard of value. White beads were plentiful, but the small purple part of each quahog shell was hardly enough for one bead. Eventually the purple beads became twice the value of white wampum.

Since hostilities between various native nations often kept wampum supplies down, the natives soon accepted glass beads from France called *rassades*. But this successful counterfeit destroyed the value of the shell beads. As far as the natives were concerned, the copies, varying in size and colour, were just as pretty as the original, as well as being cheaper. The French traders sold or bartered their accumulated furs at the *Magasin du Communauté*, the official company store, in Quebec. Here they obtained the various items newly arrived from France, including *rassades*, which would then be traded to the natives for more furs. Although *rassades* ceased to be legal currency by 1670 when coinage was introduced, the colonists continued to use them until after 1700. The natives rejected coin in trade, however. They preferred their wampum.

Native demand for European goods and the marked increase in the supply of furs was significant for France as well as for Canada. When the fur trade began, the market in Europe was limited, by and large, to marten, mink, and otter. But in time, a European vogue for wide-brimmed felt hats made from processed beaver fur sent the demand for beaver pelts soaring. Because the animals – weighing eighteen to twenty-seven kilograms each – were relatively large, native people preferred to trap them because effort expended yielded high returns. Too, in the *pays d'en haut* (up country), beavers were numerous during the early colonial period – estimated by some to be ten million.

PHOTOS: NATIONAL CURRENCY COLLECTION, BANK OF CANADA. PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES ZAGON

oney

Left: Wampum, made of white and purple Atlantic coast quahog clamshells, was used by native people in the precontact period chiefly for ornament and ceremony, but in the early fur trade period it became a form of currency. Wampum was often threaded onto string or woven into belts and sashes.

In 1670, Louis XIV ordered a special coinage for use in New France – silver coins in denominations of five *sols* and fifteen *sols* (shown here), as well as a two-*denier* piece. The obverse of the silver coins depicts a portrait bust of the king, while the reverse shows the royal arms of France.

Below: A fur trading scene inset on *A Map of the Inhabited Part of Canada from the French Surveys ...*", 1777, by Claude Joseph Sauthier.

The trade in beaver pelts, which were used to make felt hats, proved an economic stimulus to France, as manufacturers produced a wide range of commodities to trade with the native people.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-087300

The effect of the fur trade was to stimulate the economic life of France, which manufactured commodities on a large scale to exchange for furs. Into their packs the fur traders loaded not only *rassades*, but also vermilion knives, needles and thread, awls, kettles, hatchets, and small kegs of French brandy. In 1665 the natives traded the French one beaver pelt for any of the following: 2 hatchets, 1 short jacket, 2 pounds of gun powder, 4 pounds of lead shot, 8 knives with wooden handles, 2 swords, 2 axes, 10 pocket knives, 12 arrowheads, or 25 awls. Yet, the traders soon learned the value of *eau-de-vie*, the French brandy. More beaver pelts could be obtained with a pint of brandy than with any other merchandise.

Still, despite steady demand, the supply of furs fluctuated wildly as the French encountered new tribes or won or lost campaigns. Fluctuation in supply affected the value of the pelts, creating difficulties in the marketplace, and so the *Conseil Souverain* in Quebec took measures to obtain French coins as currency. The French monetary system was based on the *livre* – a pound of silver – both as weight and as a unit of currency. The *livre*, *sol*, and *denier* of France were comparable to the symbols on English currency – £, s., d. (pound, shilling, pence). One *livre* equaled twenty *sols*. In 1670 Louis XIV ordered a special coinage for use in the French colonies of North America. Silver coins in the denominations of five *sols* and fifteen *sols* were struck, as well as a two-*denier* piece in copper. The fifteen-*sol* piece, slightly larger than a contemporary Canadian twenty-five-cent coin, was worth a little over one English shilling of that day. From then on, each summer, a supply of coins arrived from France. However, since the settlers depended on the mother country for durable goods, the silver and copper coins invariably found their way back to France.

Export tax paid by the colonists – 25 percent on beaver pelts and 10 percent on moose skins – was the chief revenue that France derived from the colony. A 10 percent import duty on specific goods, chiefly wine and brandy, also found its way to France. Every year all beaver pelts and moose hides had to be brought to the *Magasin du Communauté* before October 20 so they could be baled and loaded onboard ship before the close of navigation. There, the prices for beaver were guaranteed, regardless of quantity, which acted as a decided stimulus to the trade. The only difference in price was between *castor gras* (greasy beaver pelts) and *castor sec* (dry pelts). Six dry pelts sewn together into a robe, which a native wore with the fur against the body, resulted in *castor gras*. After a winter's wear the pelts lost their guard hairs. Softer, called *duvet*, they were more valuable.

The king's annual coinage shipment sometimes failed to arrive. All too often this was because none had been sent.

Intermittent fighting between western natives and the alliance of the British with the eastern tribes led to great inconsistency in the returns of the fur trade. For the Canadian administrators, these conditions were aggravated by the coureurs de bois. These enterprising young men intercepted the natives on their way to the regular markets at Montreal, and were naturally declared outlaws.

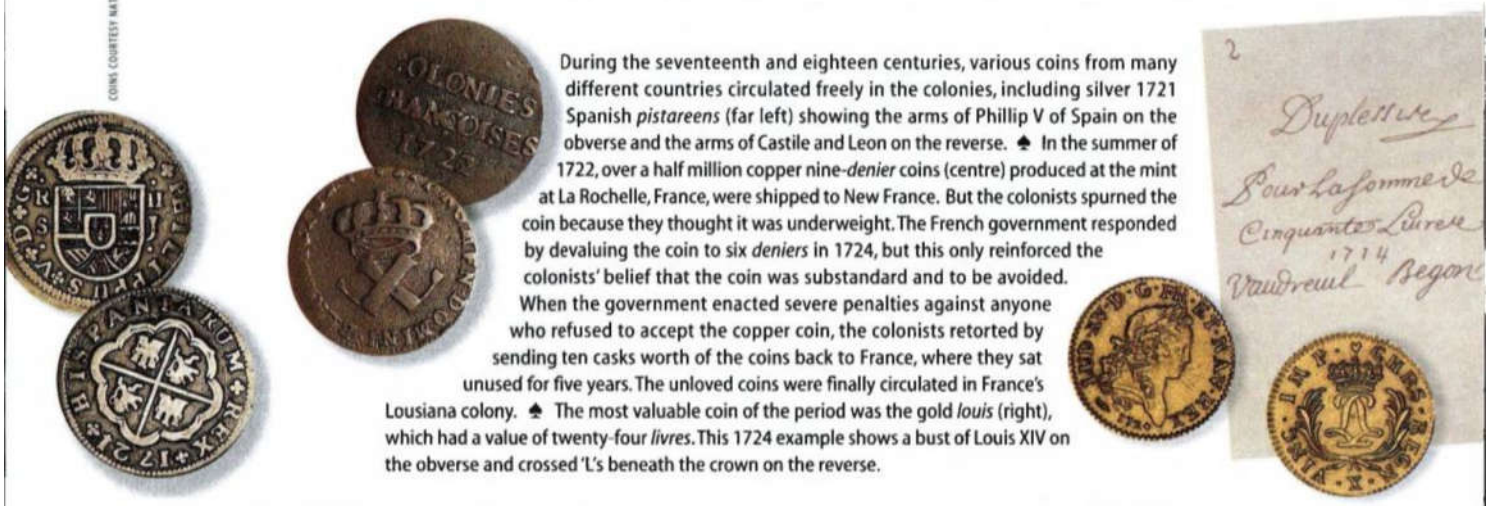
When attempts were made to bring these illicit traders under specific regulations, the coureurs de bois simply transferred their trade to the English in Albany. As early as 1670, Intendant Jean Talon reported that 1.2 million *livres'* worth of beaver pelts had gone to the English at Albany. There the traders received a musket for two beaver pelts, while in Montreal a musket required five pelts. By trading in Albany, the coureurs de bois also escaped the 25 percent Canadian tax on their beaver. By early 1681, Canada's revenue had been reduced to a quarter of what it had been five years earlier.

This increasing illicit fur trade with the English in Albany made a greater amount of foreign coinage available to the coureurs de bois. Spanish currency, for instance, which they brought back with them to New France, was chiefly in silver dollars, or *piastres*, and their fractions – halves, quarters and eighths; each dollar was valued at three *livres*, nineteen *sols* and one *denier*. A great many of the coins passed to the French were worn, however, and French merchants refused to accept them at their face value. After numerous complaints were lodged, local authorities passed an ordinance stating that all foreign money should be converted on the basis of weight. Worn coins consequently lost value, but no one was allowed to refuse worn coins. Lacking appropriate scales, it was impossible in a colony like Canada for people to properly weigh the coins and, therefore, determine accurate exchange rates. To remedy this situation, local authorities passed another ordinance in 1683: all foreign coins were to be stamped with the fleur-de-lis; worn coins were to be arranged in four classes stamped with Roman numerals. This settled the matter for a time.

Between 1661 and 1683, local authorities issued more than seven hundred decrees and orders relating directly or indirectly to money. To make matters worse, the king's annual coinage shipment sometimes failed to arrive. All too often this was because none had been sent.

Gradually the economy suffered from an overabundance of beaver. France's hatters, eager for the European monopoly on felt hats, had opposed the exports of any pelts to countries with competing craftsmen. But by the 1680s, the vagaries of men's fashions (hat brims were narrower) and the use of such cheaper felt-making materials as rabbit and sheep wool had shrunk the market. An unmarketable surplus of beaver pelts grew in France, prices fell, and profits shrank. The result for Canada was disastrous. Between 1683 and 1685, beaver pelt exports dropped to 23,568 pounds from 95,489 pounds. Goods imported in exchange suffered a corresponding decline. Meanwhile, to address the problem of coin shortage and keep currency in Canada, the intendant in Quebec, Jacques Demeulles, proclaimed that traders of peltries were prohibited, under penalty, from paying with coins. Anyone failing to comply with this edict would have his goods confiscated and be fined two thousand *livres*, to be divided equally among His Majesty, the Hôtel Dieu of Quebec, and the informant.

At the same time, troops sent to Quebec greatly increased France's expenditures in the colony. In 1680, westward expansion meant the colony once again faced the menace of war with the Iroquois – the most formidable military power in North America – who had invaded Illinois territory. The continued Iroquois attacks kept everyone on guard, and in October 1682, King Louis XIV ordered every able-bodied man in Canada to purchase firearms. To pay for the weapons, the king instructed merchants to accept payment in wheat, peas, or Indian corn at the rate of fifty *sols* a peck. (The price of wheat fluctuated, but at that time one pound of bread could be bought for one *sol*.) Paying the troops, however, put Demeulles in a particularly difficult position. In September 1685 he wrote to the French government, pointing out that no



COINS COURTESY NATIONAL CURRENCY COLLECTION, BANK OF CANADA. PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES ZAGON

During the seventeenth and eighteen centuries, various coins from many different countries circulated freely in the colonies, including silver 1721 Spanish *pistareens* (far left) showing the arms of Phillip V of Spain on the obverse and the arms of Castile and Leon on the reverse. ♠ In the summer of 1722, over a half million copper nine-*denier* coins (centre) produced at the mint at La Rochelle, France, were shipped to New France. But the colonists spurned the coin because they thought it was underweight. The French government responded by devaluing the coin to six *deniers* in 1724, but this only reinforced the colonists' belief that the coin was substandard and to be avoided. When the government enacted severe penalties against anyone who refused to accept the copper coin, the colonists retorted by sending ten casks worth of the coins back to France, where they sat unused for five years. The unloved coins were finally circulated in France's Lousiana colony. ♠ The most valuable coin of the period was the gold *louis* (right), which had a value of twenty-four *livres*. This 1724 example shows a bust of Louis XIV on the obverse and crossed 'L's beneath the crown on the reverse.

provision had been made for the soldiers' salaries. To meet the most urgent requirements he had drawn upon his own private means and those of his friends.

A few months later Demeulles found himself without cash on hand to pay the soldiers' monthly wages. With no available supplies of paper in the colony and no printing presses to create paper currency, Demeulles decided to gather up all the playing cards. He cut the cards – which were glossy and of good quality – in four, marked the value of each quarter, and affixed his signature and seal. These quartered cards – the first paper currency in Canada, and indeed in North America[1] – were to be used for future payments. He issued an ordinance declaring that these cards would be redeemed as soon as the ships arrived; until then they had to be accepted at face value. However, no sooner were the playing cards redeemed than a fresh quantity had to be issued. Meanwhile the colonists had become accustomed to the paper currency. Indeed, they found it much handier and transportable than bulky items of barter.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-017019

Card money, 1714. According to the rules governing playing card money, red figures denoted fifty *livres*, black 100 *livres*. The size and shape of the card also differed with the denomination. These pieces are signed by Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, governor general of New France, and Michel Bégon de la Picardière, intendant. Introduced in 1685, card money was deemed a solution to the chronic shortage of coins in the colonies. By 1714, card money to a value of two million *livres* was in circulation.

When, in 1690, part of the supplies sent to Canada was lost at sea, the new intendant, Jean Bochart de Champigny, issued another supply of playing card money to meet this exceptional situation. But with little merchandise to buy, prices rose steadily, and when in 1702 Intendant François de Beauharnois succeeded Champigny, a great deal of unredeemed playing card money was still in circulation. The colonists were waiting to have their cards redeemed whenever the money supply from France finally arrived.

The delay in redeeming the cards suggests an increased confidence in Canada's paper currency, and card money became a regular means of meeting all deficiencies in the supply of coins. By 1714 playing cards to the value of two million *livres* were in circulation, with some cards being worth as much as one hundred *livres*.

Back in France, Louis XIV was embroiled in hostilities with his European neighbours. The cost of glory was high, and the state could never raise enough money by taxation to pay the bill for the armies. Thus the treasury was unable to redeem the Canadian playing card money when it fell due at the end of 1715. When this became known, the settlers preferred to keep their cards, which still maintained some value in the colony. Shortly after, another ordinance from France extended the time for redeeming the card money until the autumn of 1719, when the last vessel of that year would depart from Quebec. That year, *Le Chameau*[2] arrived with the long-awaited cargo of coins, plus an advance for the expenses of 1720.

In 1729, before leaving France for Canada, the new intendant, Gilles Hocquart, purchased two thousand packs of unprinted playing cards – fifty-two in each pack – for the purpose of preparing card money. Unfortunately, two-thirds of the packs were lost in a shipwreck. The remaining cards were cut according to a fixed value; the highest was a whole card worth twenty-four *livres*.

All told, between 1685 and 1760, twenty-two issues of card money were introduced and used in Canada. In the latter part of this period the issue of ordinances, notes drawn on the treasury of Quebec and written on plain paper, supplemented the supply of card money. Although the issuance of card money was originally intended as a temporary expedient – a provisional measure – the economy of Canada was run almost entirely on locally produced card money for a period of seventy-five years. The colonists not only accepted this form of currency readily, they were so confident in it that they kept a sizable percentage in savings. When the British took over New France in 1759, more than fourteen million *livres* of such notes were in circulation. Because the French government refused to redeem the notes, the value of card money dropped considerably until an agreement with Britain was finally reached for its redemption.

[1] In 1690 the colony of Massachusetts, lacking the necessary metallic currency to pay its soldiers, produced Colonial Bills of Credit. A few years later other colonies followed with similar issues.

[2] During its seventh voyage to Canada in 1725, *Le Chameau*, with a large quantity of silver *écus* and gold *louis*, was wrecked off the coast of Cape Breton Island, bringing great suffering to hard-pressed New France. In 1960 the remains of the ship were discovered, the money still aboard.

Adrienne Leduc is a Vancouver writer with a special interest in early Canadian history. She previously wrote on explorer Robert Cavelier de La Salle for the April/May 1999 edition of the *Beaver*.

The Canada–U.S. border may be celebrated as the longest undefended border in the world today, but the road to tranquillity hasn't been exactly smooth. Even New Brunswick and Maine had occasion to quarrel. It wasn't an all-out brawl.

But it came close.

Michael Westaway McCue

The Aroostook War

The sylvan stretches of the Aroostook Valley in the northernmost section of Maine may not inspire martial stirrings in the casual observer. But at one time, these timberlands, so strategic and valuable, were the flash point of a dispute that nearly set off a third war between England and the United States.

A dispute over the boundary between New Brunswick and Maine began after the 1783 Treaty of Paris ended the American Revolutionary War. The treaty defined the boundary as the "highlands" that separated waters flowing into the St. Lawrence from the rivers flowing into the Atlantic. The British interpretation of this rivers question would have placed present-day Maine towns of Caribou and Presque Isle well within the boundaries of New Brunswick. A line drawn by the United States would have taken Edmundston and parts of Quebec as far north as Cabano on Lac Témiscouata as part of Maine, practically to the strategic St. Lawrence River.

The British had a vital military interest in an overland route between Halifax and Quebec, especially during the winter when the St. Lawrence was frozen and unnavigable. The War of 1812, which required moving British troops quickly from their Halifax disembarkation point to the interior, made that clear. But when Maine became a state in 1820 and began granting land in the disputed thirty-one thousand square kilometres of the Aroostook Valley, access to the St. Lawrence was threatened.

In 1831, the King of the Netherlands arbitrated the

COLLECTIONS OF THE MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

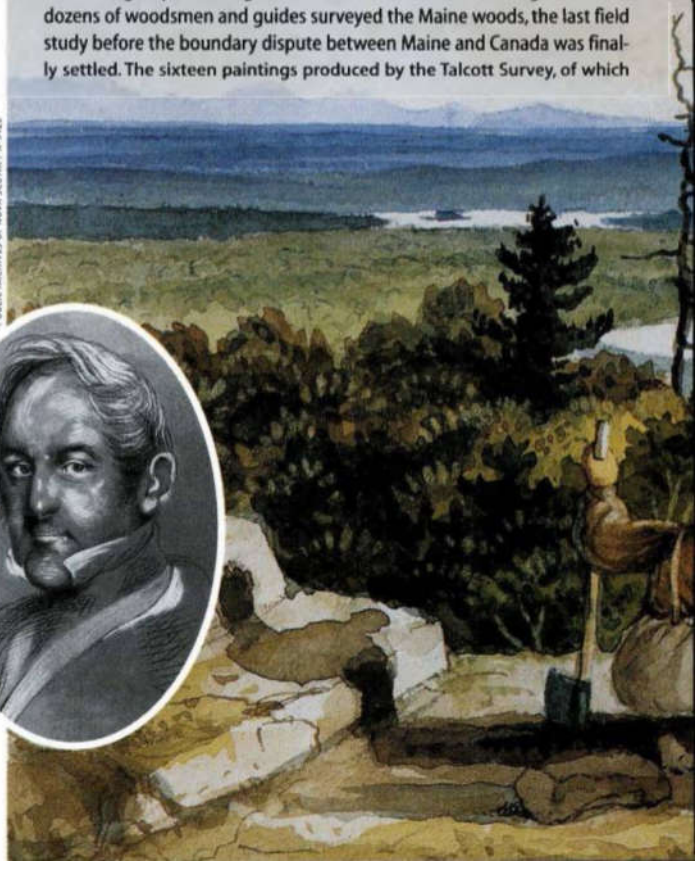
Edward Kent (1802–1877), above, was Republican governor of Maine from 1841 to 1842 during a period of escalating conflict between Britain and the U.S. over the Aroostook Valley. When the Maine legislature approved ten thousand men to enforce the state's claims, Kent deployed the bulk of them on the border with southern New Brunswick.

COLLECTIONS OF THE MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

John Fairfield (1797–1847), Democratic governor of Maine for two terms, 1839 to 1841 and 1842 to 1843, was the American signatory to the 1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty, which settled the long-running dispute over the Aroostook Valley.

Sir John Harvey (1778–1852), right, a hero of the War of 1812, was appointed lieutenant governor of New Brunswick in 1837. An able conciliator, he successfully negotiated with the governor of Maine to prevent the dispute over the Maine–New Brunswick boundary from leading to war.

In 1840 a group of distinguished American scientists and engineers with dozens of woodsmen and guides surveyed the Maine woods, the last field study before the boundary dispute between Maine and Canada was finally settled. The sixteen paintings produced by the Talcott Survey, of which



PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF NOVA SCOTIA / N-9428

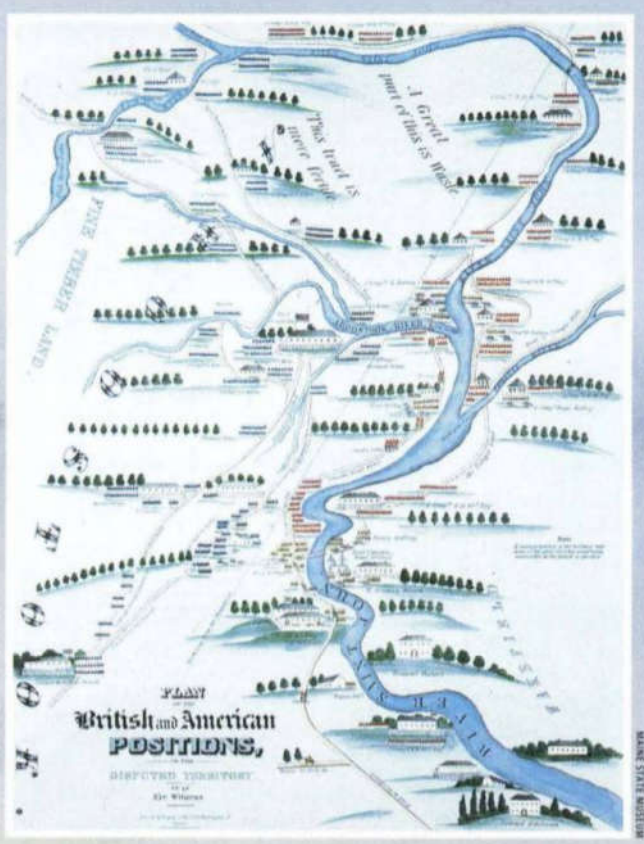
dispute. The British accepted his decision, which was favoured by President Andrew Jackson, but Maine, given to both state pride and hatred of the British, held fast to its interpretation of the 1783 peace treaty. In Washington a majority in the U.S. Senate supported Maine's claims.

By 1837, each side was proceeding as if the dispute had been settled in its favour. The British began preliminary steps toward putting through a rail line along the St. John River to Quebec, while Maine began constructing a road through the Aroostook Valley. Maine also sent settlers into the Madawaska region, much to the chagrin of New Brunswick Lieutenant Governor John Harvey. The friction culminated in the arrest of Ebenezer Greeley, a Maine census taker working the region.

Harvey sought to deter Maine's building aggression by sending troops to the border at Woodstock and Grand Falls as defined by the Treaty of Paris. However, neither Harvey nor British authorities could spare many men as rebellion in Lower Canada preoccupied their resources. They wanted to avoid any direct confrontation that might impede the flow of troops and materials from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to Lower Canada, or worse, require their presence along the St. John River. Lord Palmerston, the British foreign secretary, wrote optimistically that Maine would drop its claims when it discovered that England "[did not] care for their swagger" and that England was "quite strong enough" to maintain control over the region. But in time, threats from Maine could no longer be neglected. Matters came to head in early 1839.

The forests of the Aroostook Valley were a lucrative source of lumber. Maine regularly granted logging licences to work areas claimed by New Brunswick while New Brunswick did the same in areas claimed by Maine. Accordingly,

A period depiction of the disputed territory between Britain and the United States.

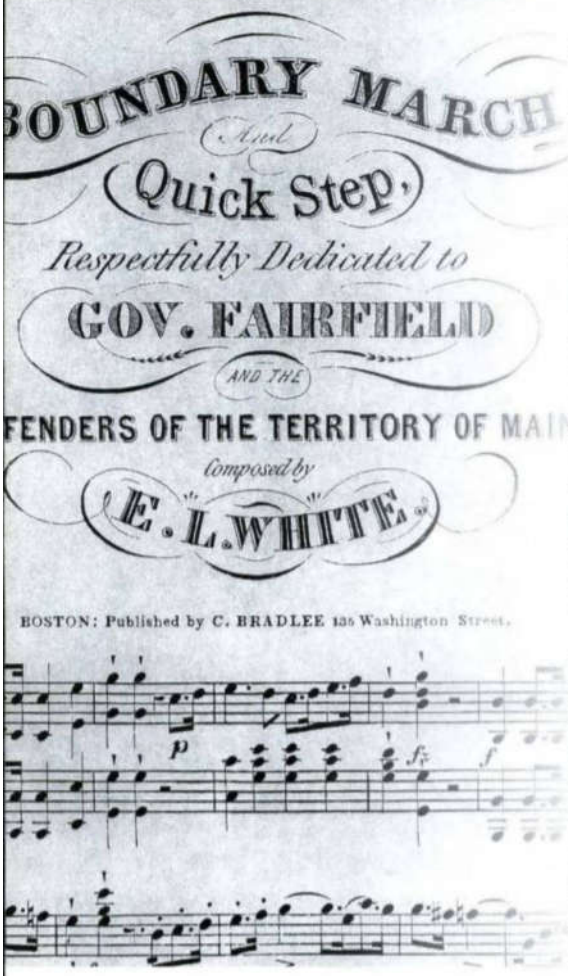


MAINE STATE MUSEUM

this is one, were intended to be exact renditions of the scenes as the surveyors themselves saw them. Each was drawn on site with the aid of a *camera lucida*, which, by means of a prism, projected an exact outline of the view on paper that could then be traced. Later, watercolour was added to the line drawings.

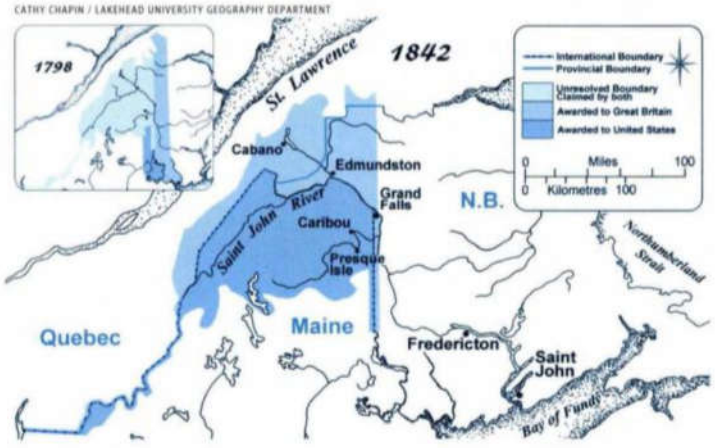
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AT COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND

Sentiment for war grew so strong in Maine that by 1839 patriotic songs began to appear in the daily papers.



each government regularly seized lumber cut in areas it called its own. In January 1839 the governor of Maine, John Fairfield, upped the stakes by sending two hundred armed men to end the "work of devastation and pillage" wrought by bands of Canadian loggers on the Aroostook. After seizing several of the "trespassers," the leader of the Mainers, Land Agent Rufus McIntire, and fifty of his men were arrested and jailed in Woodstock, N.B. The residents of Woodstock, agitated over these events, raided the local armoury, seized weapons, and started off for the Aroostook Valley to engage the Mainers. Harvey quickly ordered them to abandon their plan.

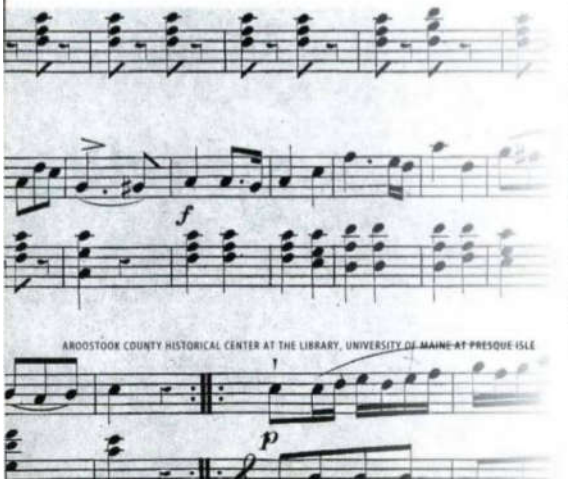
These actions of the New Brunswick authorities and citizens further inflamed passions in Maine. The state legislature approved $800,000 and ten thousand men to enforce Maine's claims. New Maine governor Edward Kent deployed the bulk of these men at Houlton, on the border with southern New Brunswick. Meanwhile, Harvey increased the number of New Brunswick militia at Woodstock, a mere twenty-four kilometres from Houlton.



Playing its own part in the brinkmanship, Nova Scotia appropriated $100,000 in aid to its neighbouring province.

From London, British minister of state H.S. Fox railed at Washington for "not daring to offend any state ... however evidently in the wrong." Though the U.S. public was split on Maine's actions, Democratic President Martin Van Buren feared the political fallout from failure to aid Maine, a state with a strong Democratic voting record. Van Buren decided to take a middle road. He condemned New Brunswick's incursions while also condemning Maine's unauthorized actions against the loggers. He would support Maine if attacked, but not if the attack was provoked through Maine's belligerence. Van Buren did not address any of the underlying causes of the tensions, but stated that New Brunswick should not move forcibly against the Maine "posse," the Maine militia should withdraw from the disputed area, and each local government should be equally responsible for the violations of its trespassers. Congress followed Van Buren's lead; it supported a peaceful end to the dispute while authorizing ten million dollars and fifty thousand men for possible action should Britain use the quarrel as pretense to reclaim a few colonies.

Van Buren sent General Winfield Scott in the hope that he could forge a settlement. Scott had corresponded with Harvey since the War of 1812, and the lieutenant governor and the general had grown to respect one another. By late March, after a flurry of correspondence between Augusta and Fredericton, Harvey and Fairfield agreed to a truce. Each side would withdraw its forces from the disputed area, while pending official settlement of the borders, the Madawaska region would belong to New Brunswick, while Aroostook would be nominally under Maine's control.

That settlement was reached in 1842 through the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. Maine was given 18,000 square kilometres of the area on the south side of the Aroostook River, on which an estimated two thousand Acadians lived, while New Brunswick received only 13,000 square kilometres. However, England accomplished its goals as its portion included the strategic heights commanding the St. Lawrence, a reversal of the arbitration of the King of the Netherlands, who had given the heights to the United States. Thus the bloodless Aroostook War ended. Maine kept the majority of the profitable timberland, and England, seemingly at the expense of New Brunswick's lumber industry, secured its lifeline from the Maritimes to Upper and Lower Canada.

Michael Westaway McCue is a graduate student of political science at Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts. His story, "From the Mouths of My Cannon," about hostilities between New France governor the Comte de Frontenac and the commander of New England's militia, Sir William Phips, appeared in the October/November 1999 edition of the *Beaver*.

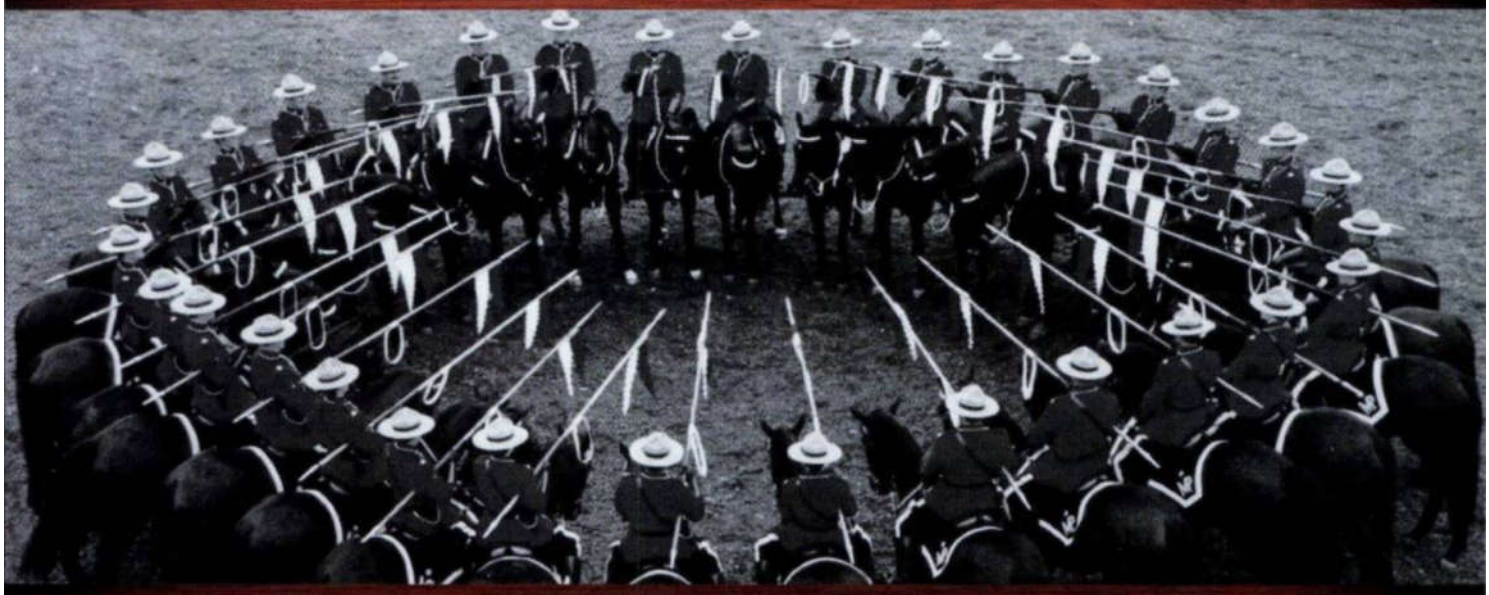
WE MAY MOVE

MILLIONS OF TONS OF GOODS

AROUND THE WORLD

BUT THEY MOVE

A NATION



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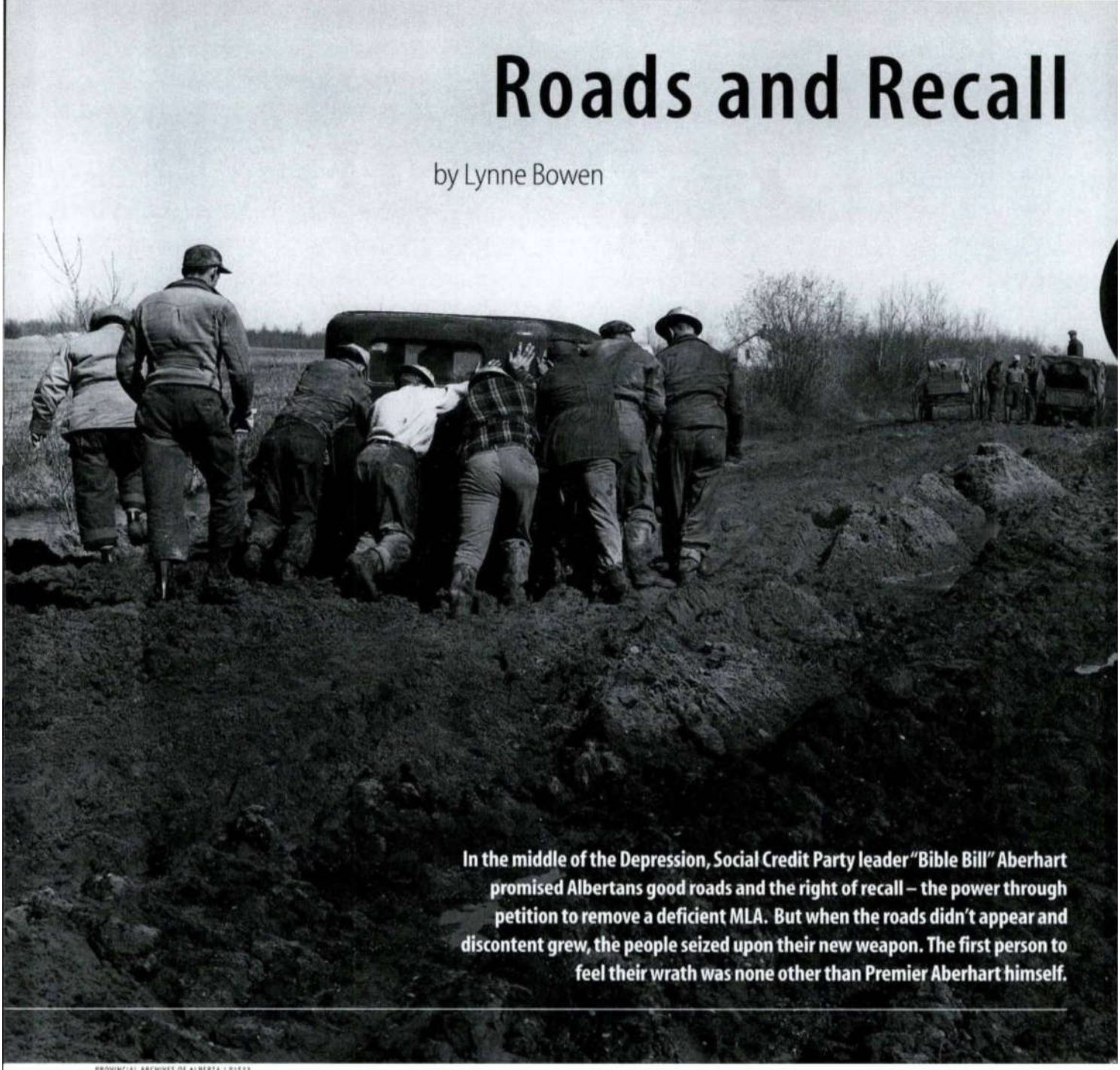
Roads and Recall

by Lynne Bowen



In the middle of the Depression, Social Credit Party leader "Bible Bill" Aberhart promised Albertans good roads and the right of recall – the power through petition to remove a deficient MLA. But when the roads didn't appear and discontent grew, the people seized upon their new weapon. The first person to feel their wrath was none other than Premier Aberhart himself.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA / P1533

It was only natural gas tinged with a little straw-coloured oil, but when the Dingman drilling rig hit pay dirt on Sheep Creek in 1914, it was enough to start the first oil boom in Alberta. For the next twenty years, the countryside south of Calgary between Okotoks and High River on the east and Turner Valley on the west attracted a steady flow of companies searching for crude oil.

Since the land had been ranching country from before the turn of the century, the roads were mostly former cowboy trails. The only "modern" roads were one-way tracks running along the road allowances where trucks and horse-drawn

When ranching was rural southern Alberta's chief occupation, roads were not a significant concern. When oil was discovered southwest of Calgary, however, the need for good roads to move equipment and workers became a burning issue.

wagons hauled rigs, pipe, and portable shacks from drill site to drill site. Rain turned the black soil to mud; snow blocked the roads entirely. Drivers had to chain their tires or detour through the adjacent fields.

By 1934, with the Depression deepening throughout North America and the drought making conditions even worse on the prairies, more and more people came to Turner Valley in search of work. None of the companies had hit crude oil yet, but many had found naptha or natural gasoline. They sold gas to the cities of southern Alberta and burned the surplus off through flares whose light made night seem like day.

The waste gas and the gas for the cities and the oil that still lay underground were provincial assets ever since Alberta had gained control of its natural resources from the federal government in 1930. The change in ownership had made the residents of Turner Valley realize their importance to the economy of the province. They demanded and received their own electoral district – Okotoks–High River – but their roads did not improve.

The majority of oilfield workers supported the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA), the party in power in the province since 1921. The UFA had provided reasonably good government for most of its tenure, but, like many governments of the time, had not been able to counter the devastating effects of the Depression. The residents of Okotoks–High River and, indeed, the population of the entire province, were ripe for a saviour.

He appeared in the unlikely guise of a high-school principal whose avocation was evangelical preacher and whose appearance reminded many of Mussolini. William Aberhart, or "Bible Bill" as he was known by the more irreverent observers of his charismatic crusade, had become interested in social credit, the monetary reform doctrines of British engineer Major C.H. Douglas. Although it is doubtful that Aberhart ever really understood Douglas's ideas, he latched onto the central theme: the terrible state of the world's economy was caused by a shortage of purchasing power.

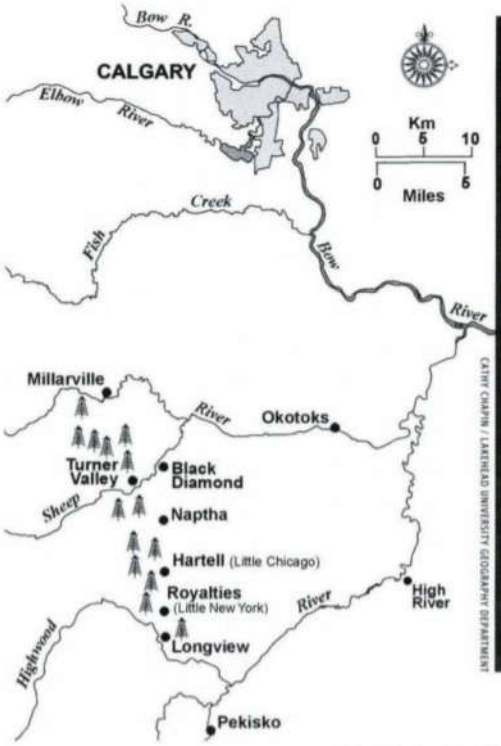
Aberhart was a dynamic preacher whose Sunday afternoon radio broadcasts were attracting increasingly large audiences. On the radio and on the stump, Aberhart mixed his Christian message with his version of Douglas's theories using easy-to-understand images like priming the pump and circulating the blood – images both he and his audiences could understand. He poked fun at bankers and told his followers he would save them by teaching them how to use their own credit.

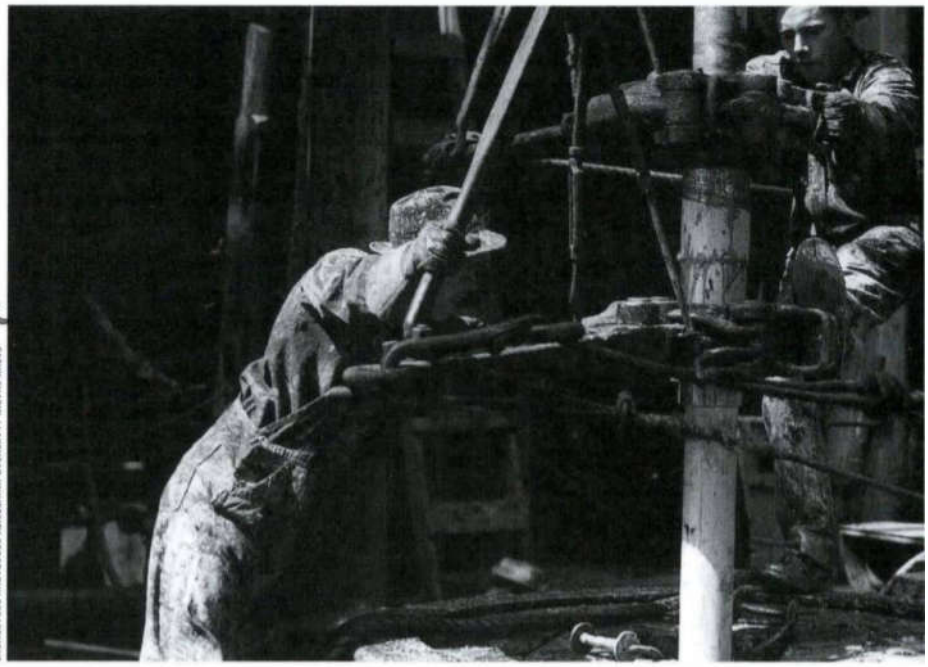
Social Credit study groups sprang up in every city and town in the province. In the new electoral district south of Calgary there were groups in Okotoks, High River, Black Diamond, and Turner Valley. The faithful met and passed resolutions and looked forward to the day when Aberhart would make good on his promise of a twenty-five-dollar-a-month dividend for every Albertan.

On election day, August 22, 1935, bonfires burning on the hills around Calgary celebrated the Social Credit victory. Fifty-six of the sixty-three seats in the legislature now

GLENBOW ARCHIVES, CALGARY, CANADA / NA-2626-33

Though no one doubted a Social Credit victory in the 1935 Alberta election, Aberhart, the party leader, decided not to run. Instead, he chose to commandeer a seat following the election and picked the Okotoks–High River constituency. Some speculated that because the site included a ranch owned by Edward, Prince of Wales (right, on horse Midnight), Aberhart wanted the prestige of being the popular prince's MLA.





Western Canada's first oil boom began with the discovery of oil at Turner Valley, southwest of Calgary.

The plains had been transformed into an industrial hodgepodge of derricks and slapped-together shacks, where veteran roughnecks and untried farmer's sons vied for jobs and shelter. ... There was gas everywhere. ... People ignored the gas but it was harder to ignore the shortage of clean water.

belonged to a party with absolutely no experience in governing. While Albertans of every political persuasion looked forward to their first dividend cheque, cynics wondered why their new premier had not run in the election and whose seat he would now commandeer.

Six weeks later, the newly elected member for Okotoks–High River, Reverend William Morrison, who had polled three times as many votes as the UFA incumbent, resigned his seat to make way for his leader. People questioned why Aberhart had chosen this particular riding. The official reason was that the cabinet needed representation in southern Alberta. The more likely reason was that Turner Valley was one of the few parts of the province where people could find jobs. And it looked as if there would be more jobs soon. Since 1934, Turner Valley Royalties, a company with a new financing strategy, had been defying conventional wisdom by drilling deeply into the limestone on a hunch that crude oil lay beneath the western flank of the valley.

At Pekisko, not far from the drill site, was the EP Ranch, which had been owned by the Prince of Wales since 1919. Although he hadn't been at the ranch since 1926, the prince was a neighbour, as far as the people of Okotoks–High River were concerned. Gossips said the real reason Aberhart chose the riding was because he wanted to be the popular prince's member of the legislative assembly (MLA).

Having secured his seat in an uncontested by-election, Aberhart called the legislature and honoured his campaign promises by presenting 108 acts and amendments for its approval. Among them was the Recall Act, which would allow disgruntled voters, by signing petitions in sufficient numbers, to rid themselves of MLAs who were doing their jobs poorly.

By this time, the Prince of Wales had succeeded his father and was King Edward VIII. As the Empire prepared for his coronation and his MLA pondered the pros and cons of going to London at taxpayers' expense, the legislature was debating the details of what would become the first recall act in the British Empire.

The Progressive Party had toyed with the idea of federal recall in the 1920s, but this was the first time a party in power had proposed it. The bill had to be framed so the government could keep its promise without risking its own neck. Accordingly, the number of signatures required was set at 66.66 percent of the people on the voters' list. Opponents were outraged, especially when they realized that the base line was the voters' list and not the list of people who had actually voted. The *Calgary Herald*, Aberhart's sworn enemy and an opponent of recall, however, was jubilant: "The *Herald* ... applauds the fact that provincial recall will be completely inoperative."

When the act received royal assent on April 3, 1936, it was the first Social Credit election promise to be fulfilled. Several other bills were being challenged in the higher courts, and the promised twenty-five-dollar dividend had been cancelled when the government discovered Alberta had no money.

Aberhart was a beleaguered man by the time he visited his constituency for the first time on June 19, 1936. The

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA / P1238

Remember this ?
There is nothing I should like better than to represent Calgary as premier of the province
CALGARY RIDING
?

GLENBOW ARCHIVES, STEWART CAMERON COLLECTION, CALGARY, CANADA

The *Calgary Herald* was no fan of William Aberhart and Social Credit. After the 1935 election, the paper hired Stewart Cameron as its first staff cartoonist and let him loose on the premier. Stewart found the eccentric and chubby preacher-politician an ideal subject for his satire.

High River town hall overflowed with 850 people anxious to hear what their MLA was going to do about back wages, work-site safety, and the need for a health officer, a hospital, good drinking water, and, most of all, better roads.

Better roads had become a hotter issue just three days before when a gusher of crude oil had shot high into the Turner Valley Royalties derrick, bringing in the first real oil boom. Aberhart took it as a good omen. "It is mighty fine that you should strike a gusher just at this time," he told his audiences from the towns, work camps, and squatter sites of the valley. The mountain-rimmed plains had been transformed into an industrial hodgepodge of derricks and slapped-together shacks, where veteran roughnecks and untried farmer's sons, some single and some with families, vied for jobs and shelter.

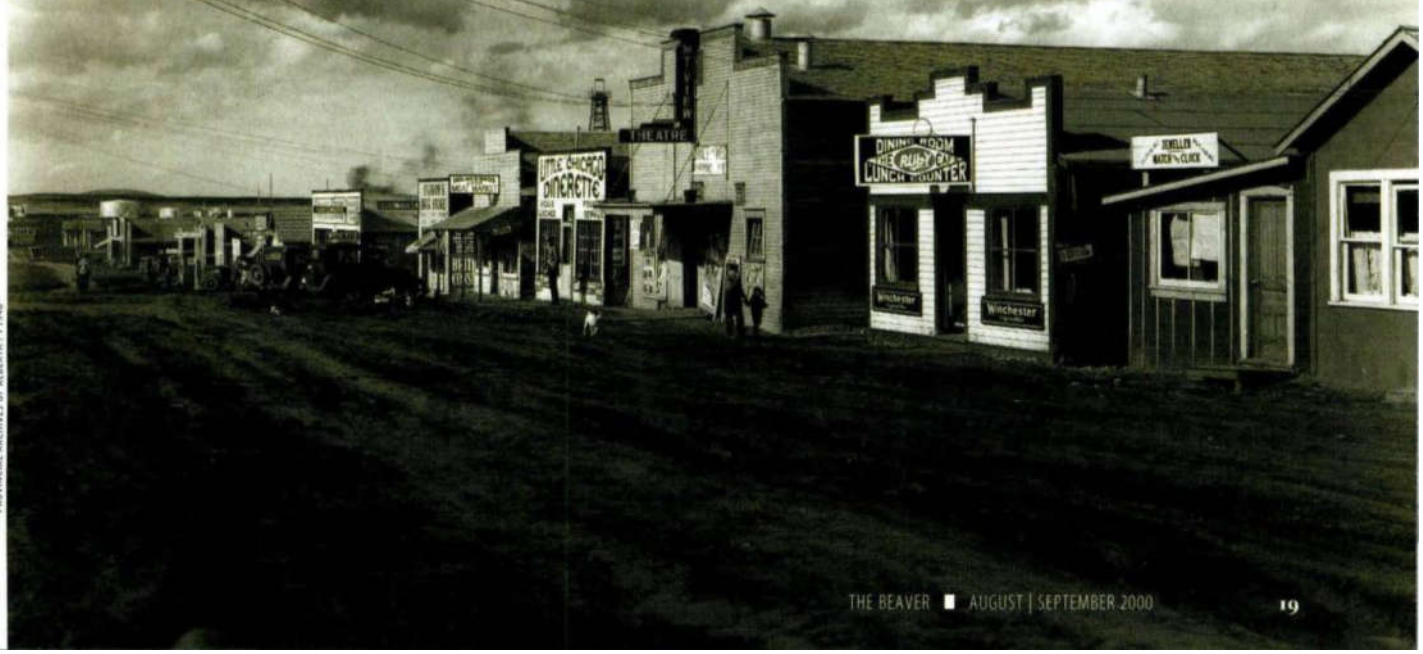
The shacks were provided with free gas that was just as likely to blow a man's roof off as cook his dinner. There was gas everywhere. Gas in the flares and gas in the air that made food smell, cars reek, wire fences rust, and paint peel.

People ignored the gas but it was harder to ignore the shortage of clean water. Already epidemics had closed the schools and confined people to their houses under quarantine. Aberhart's constituents had crowded into the meeting halls to see what their famous MLA had to say about the people's health and the people's roads.

Little, as it turned out. As soon as he could, the great man left the constituency for Calgary to broadcast his regular Sunday afternoon radio sermon before his usual live audience. Whereas before the election his sermons had been about the financial system starving people to death and the "Fifty Big Shots" who were ruining the country, now he tried to explain his policies and discredit his enemies. The press was the biggest enemy of all.

One Sunday afternoon, as Aberhart spoke, a young man sat in the radio audience sketching. Stewart Cameron had just been hired as the first staff cartoonist at the *Calgary Herald* and before him on the platform was a cartoonist's dream: a fat, bald, bombastic preacher, part religious cru-

With the countryside south of Calgary booming with oil production and burgeoning populations, new towns with such fanciful names as Little Chicago grew up seemingly overnight in countryside that had previously been devoted to ranching.



PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA / P1946

In Black Diamond a fistfight "raged merrily" after the chairman ordered his henchman to drag a wisecracking oil worker from the back of the hall.

sader, part dictator, part fool. His unconventional approach to politics had drawn reporters from the international press; soon Cameron's cartoons would have a worldwide audience.

The *Herald* hired Cameron just as the government was celebrating the first anniversary of the election. Fifteen to twenty thousand picnickers crowded Calgary's St. George's Island on August 22, 1936, to hear Aberhart speak. Beside the premier on the podium was his bespectacled lieutenant, Ernest C. Manning, twenty-eight years old and bursting with religious and political zeal.

All through the following fall and winter, the government urged the faithful to support prosperity certificates, its newest scheme to get money moving. Part of every worker's paycheque was to be in scrip instead of real money, and the scrip would lose its value if it was not spent immediately. People called it "funny money" and wondered why it could not be used to pay fines or taxes or buy liquor. By the time prosperity certificates were abandoned the next year, the movement of money was the least of Aberhart's problems.

GLENBOW ARCHIVES, CALGARY, CANADA, NA-56-206

William "Bible Bill" Aberhart became leader of the world's first Social Credit government in 1935. Born in Ontario in 1878, Aberhart was trained as a teacher, but his interest in Christian ministry led him to lay preaching, first in the mainstream Presbyterian and Methodist churches, then later in fundamentalist congregations. In Calgary, his home after 1910, he recognized radio's potential for reaching mass audiences, and in 1925 began his famous Sunday afternoon broadcasts. Though originally nonpolitical, Aberhart used his radio platform in the midst of the Depression to propagate the monetary-reform doctrines known as social credit, which proposed remedying the unequal distribution of wealth by increasing consumer purchasing power. Aberhart's notion was to give each Albertan a twenty-five-dollar-a-month dividend, an election promise that proved impossible to fulfill. Aberhart died in office in 1943 and was succeeded by Ernest C. Manning (shown here seated right at a 1936 Social Credit picnic). The Social Credit party ruled Alberta until 1971.

The winter of 1936–37 had begun with the abdication of King Edward VIII. By March the riding was flooded with job seekers drawn by the crude-oil boom. Two new communities – Little Chicago and Little New York – had sprung up in the southern end of the valley, adding additional shacks and demands on the water supply and compounding the appalling condition of the roads.

Then a letter to the editor appeared in the *Herald* signed by "Weary Opposition" from Turner Valley.

> *It is more than time that disillusioned social crediters and the opposition rose up in protest at the bombastic futilities and petty squabbles of the Aberhart form of administration. We are over-weary of eighteen months of windy promises. Shall we continue like broody hens with another season's setting of government addled eggs?*

It was time for some fence mending in the premier's riding. Word went out that he would visit his constituents in the third week of April. On the morning of April 21, Aberhart's party, which included Mr. W.A. Fallow, minister of public works, left Edmonton and ran straight into a late spring storm. High winds pelted the two-car calvacade with sleet; two punctured tires compounded the misery. The trip was 350 kilometres and an entire day long. In High River, 250 skeptical people waited.

A travel-weary Mr. Fallow took the podium first to announce that two or three road gangs would be put to work on the very snow-covered road he had just travelled over and that construction would commence within ten days on a gravelled highway in the south end of the valley.

The premier then rose and delivered a fighting speech. But the people of Okotoks–High River had specific concerns they wanted addressed. Word had spread that the government planned to reduce the work week to forty hours in order to spread the jobs around. In addition, workers would have to register with the government and be properly trained and certified. The oil industry, managers and workers alike, wanted none of it.

The premier's constituents were not alone in their discontent. On September 8, 1937, twenty-four thousand people crammed into Calgary's Victoria Pavilion and overflowed into the annex and the exhibition grandstand beyond. Prominent in the crowd was a delegation of men and women from Okotoks–High River that had come in a motorcade over one hundred cars long. The thousands were there to protest the premier's use of his Sunday radio broadcasts to fight his political battles, the lack of the promised dividend, the foolishness of prosperity certificates, and the widely discredited true blue pledges, the latest gimmick for demonstrating voter loyalty. "[The government has] treated

us to an overdose of sanctified stupidity and pompous piety which has made us the laughingstock of the rest of the country," shouted one speaker. Another read a telegram from thousands of the premier's own constituents who were opposed to Aberhart but had been unable to travel to Calgary.

Two and a half weeks later, twelve residents of the Okotoks–High River constituency posted the $200 bond required by the Recall Act and applied formally for leave to circulate petitions demanding the recall of their MLA. Though the reasons given included the fact that he had lost the confidence of his constituents, most of them echoed the provincewide issues described at the Calgary rally.

The Okotoks–High River group had forty days to collect a minimum of 4,394 signatures, but the legislation required them to collect 5,500 or 75 percent to allow for ineligible names. But since they already had pledges for 4,000 signatures, the petitioners were sure they'd succeed.

Though Aberhart acknowledged that the poor condition of the roads might have driven his constituents to take this disloyal step, he blamed "financiers" and oil company officials for the recall demand. The oil workers replied in the *Herald*:

> *[We] would be willing to go on the witness stand and swear that the idea of a recall petition originated with [us] and the residents of the towns of Okotoks and High River and that neither banks, finance companies, mortgage companies or any outside interests, political or otherwise, had anything to do with the determination to circulate a petition.*

According to the workers, there would be a crisis in Turner Valley within ten weeks when the present drilling program ended. Because the Social Credit government had alienated outside capital, there would be no new development. The oil would stay in the ground. Hundreds would be out of work. Little Chicago and Little New York would be boarded up and families forced to accept relief. Farmers and businessmen would lose their markets. And the registration of oil workers was the last straw.

But the petitioners enjoyed an unexpected advantage. The number of eligible voters had doubled since 1935. The new voters would help fill the petitions that hundreds of volunteers stood ready to circulate.

Five days later the government passed an amendment to the Recall Act limiting the eligible people to those who had been on the list in 1935. The petitioners were undaunted. Though bad weather had rendered the roads in the eastern half of the constituency impassable, 70 to 80 percent of the people had already signed. An early snowfall did not prevent a farmer on horseback from collecting his quota of signatures. A rancher successfully canvassed almost 100 percent of the voters in the western foothills.

But eager canvassers and willing voters were no match for a government with a huge majority. On September 30, 1937, a resolution to repeal the Recall Act retroactively to the date of passage received hasty first and second readings. To show how fair he was, Aberhart ostentatiously voted against the repeal.

Recall was dead, but the voters continued to fight. When federal and provincial Social Credit politicians came, like lambs to the slaughter, to face the angry electorate in a series of meetings throughout the constituency, shouts and sarcastic remarks drowned them out. Aberhart himself was not there, they explained, because he was "a very busy man." The meeting in Black Diamond nearly ended in a fistfight when a platform speaker said people had been threatened with the loss of their jobs if they didn't sign.

Aberhart was nowhere to be seen but his voice could be heard over the air waves. "We consider the recall has been started by certain persons who have an axe to grind, particularly for a change of the main highway through High River," he read from a letter on his Sunday afternoon broadcast.

Nine months passed before Aberhart braved the wrath of his constituents. At a series of meetings in the summer of 1938, angry voters filled the halls. The main issue was the return of the $200 deposit. In High River someone asked the premier when they would get the money back. His reply that the recall committee had to return the signature sheets first brought shouts of "you dirty hound" from the rear of the hall. In Millarville, the chairman tried to close the meeting when the audience asked the same question. "We will now sing the national anthem," he cried out repeatedly over the shouts of the crowd. In Black Diamond a fistfight "raged merrily" after the chairman ordered his henchman to drag a wisecracking oil worker from the back of the hall. The Okotoks meeting became so unruly that Aberhart fled through the back door while the town magistrate called in vain for order.

Some people in those audiences were on Aberhart's side. In Black Diamond, a group of men threatened to smash the cameras of the news photographers who followed the premier everywhere he went. Six women surrounded the editor of the *Turner Valley Flare* and berated him for his opposition to Aberhart; additional women protected them from the press cameras with the warning, "This is a private fight."

Aberhart's next move was a familiar one. He abruptly cancelled the rest of his tour and headed to Vancouver for a holiday, refusing to believe that he was in disrepute with the people.

In the election held two years later in 1940, the premier ran in the Calgary riding and even though the government finally returned the $200 deposit just before the people voted, his Social Credit replacement in Okotoks–High River lost to an independent candidate. But by then the world was at war and the war gave Aberhart's government a chance to redeem itself. Aberhart died in 1943 to be succeeded by his protégé, Ernest C. Manning, and the party stayed in power until 1971, riding a succession of oil booms. By the time the roads in Okotoks–High River received some attention, the industry and many of its workers had moved on to other boom towns. The idea of recall did not surface again until 1992, when the New Democratic Party of British Columbia defeated the last Social Credit government in Canada with a platform that promised, among other things, roads and recall. 🖼

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Marble Island *is a remote and barren place on the west side of Hudson's Bay. It is, presumably, the final resting place of James Knight, HBC governor, and forty of his crew, who in 1719 sailed from England in a futile quest for gold. What happened after they landed remains a mystery. What is certain is that their end was grim.*

Searching for James Knight

The year of his birth is not known. It is usually approximated around 1640, although recent evidence uncovered in New England may force the date forward. The year of his death is not known either. Most likely he died under mysterious and extremely grim circumstances on Marble Island, forty kilometres off Rankin Inlet, in 1720 or 1721. Even what he looked like is unknown, there being no portrait made, or none that passed into history. What evidence exists suggests a man who left behind a legacy of resentfulness, jealousy, almost unbelievable hard work, and suffering; a humourless character who, for half a century, dominated the lower half of Hudson Bay.

What *is* known is that in 1676 James Knight entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, a mature man, and shipwright by trade. In this same year or shortly after, following an ocean voyage that lasted eighty days, he entered, for the first time, the ferocious "Western Sea" of Hudson Bay. His assignment was to build or rebuild the company's forts and factories at the "Bottom of the Bay." Of this first encounter he would write tellingly forty years later: "It has been My Misfortune Always to have Nothing but Fatigue and Trouble in this Countree, for when I first came into it wee had Nothing but a little place not fitt to keep Hoggs in."

Apparently no amount of Fatigue and Trouble could keep James Knight out of this Countree. By 1682 he was outfitted for a return voyage, this time as deputy governor. It is typical of the man's abrasive relationship with almost everyone that on the day the expedition was to sail, the London Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, concerned that Knight would engage in private trade, refused him the right to board the ships. The conflict was resolved and he sailed the same day.

As second-in-command, Knight served under Governor John Nixon, a "tetchy" "sanctimonious" "disappointment" who excused his fondness for liquor on the grounds that "Water doth not agree with me." His own men were said to be appalled by his savage treatment of the natives. This is one of the few men with whom James Knight did not clash.

These relations changed when Nixon was replaced as governor by Henry Sergeant. Sergeant had "pertaining to him ... a parcel of women"– his wife, her friend, and a maidservant, the first white women to winter in Hudson Bay. Almost immediately the new governor directed charges against Knight, likely to the effect that Knight was packing out "skins" for private sale. Returning to England in 1685, Knight dodged these charges by proposing a scheme to reduce the costs of maintaining outposts in the bay. He also produced testimonials to his character. In the minds of the committee, however, James Knight was not to be trusted, and there followed a seven-year absence from company employment. During this time the reputation of Henry

by Peter Unwin

HUDSON'S BAY ARCHIVES, PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF MANITOBA / P-119

A South East View of Albany Factory, A Winter View. Watercolor by William Richards.

Albany Fort, later Albany Factory, at the mouth of the Albany River on James Bay, was one of the earliest forts founded by the Hudson's Bay Company. When James Knight entered the service of the HBC in 1676, Albany Fort had been in French hands for ten years, captured in the Anglo-French struggle for the Hudson Bay trade. In 1693, as governor in the bay, Knight retook Albany Fort from the French. It remained the only post in the region in the HBC's possession until 1713 when the Treaty of Utrecht restored all of Hudson Bay to the English.

Sergeant fell dramatically when he surrendered Albany Fort to the French without a fight.

In 1692 James Knight was back in favour and granted the title of "Governor & Commander in Cheif [*sic*] of all and every of Our Forts Factory's Lands and Territory ... lying in ye bottome of the Bay ... commonly called Hudson's Streights in America." In 1693 he led a powerful force into Hudson Bay and retook Albany Fort from the French. After a furious fusillade Knight discovered the fort empty but for a prisoner clapped in irons. The man, quite insane, had murdered the French surgeon and stove in the chaplain's head with an axe.

Knight remained on as governor until 1697, before sailing for England. He returned the following year, but in 1700 sailed for England, apparently for good.

By now Knight possessed nearly twenty-five years of experience in one of the harshest environments on the planet. It was a land where vinegar had to be chopped with a hatchet and "good port wine froze in the glass as pour'd." When summer came, so did the sucking insects. The terror these creatures brought with them is apparent on almost every page of Knight's diaries: "Musketos & horse flyes ... Swarms of Small Sand flyes wch is worst of all ... wee can hardly see the Sun through them ... Our Hands and face is nothing but Scabbs." At times it was not possible for Knight or his men to open their mouths. A modern study in this area found

HUDSON'S BAY ARCHIVES, PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF MANITOBA / HBCA E.3/D/102 COVER (N1166)

Albany Fort, North America from the cover of Albany account book, 1791–1792.

COURTESY BILL GOWAR

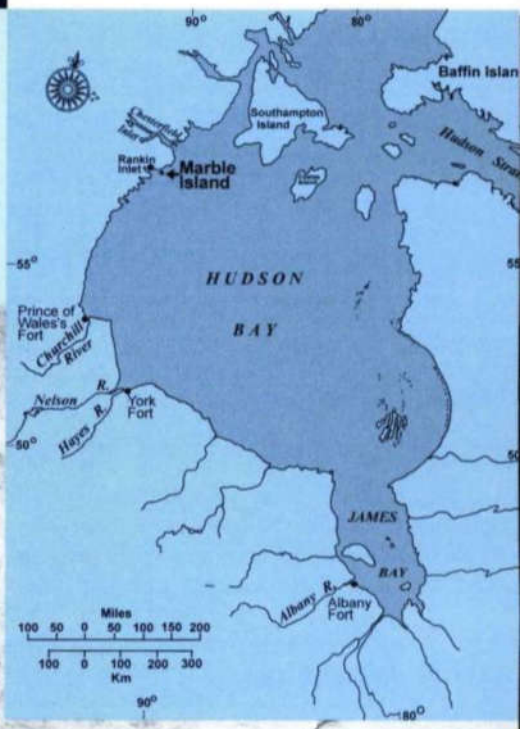
PETER INNUIN

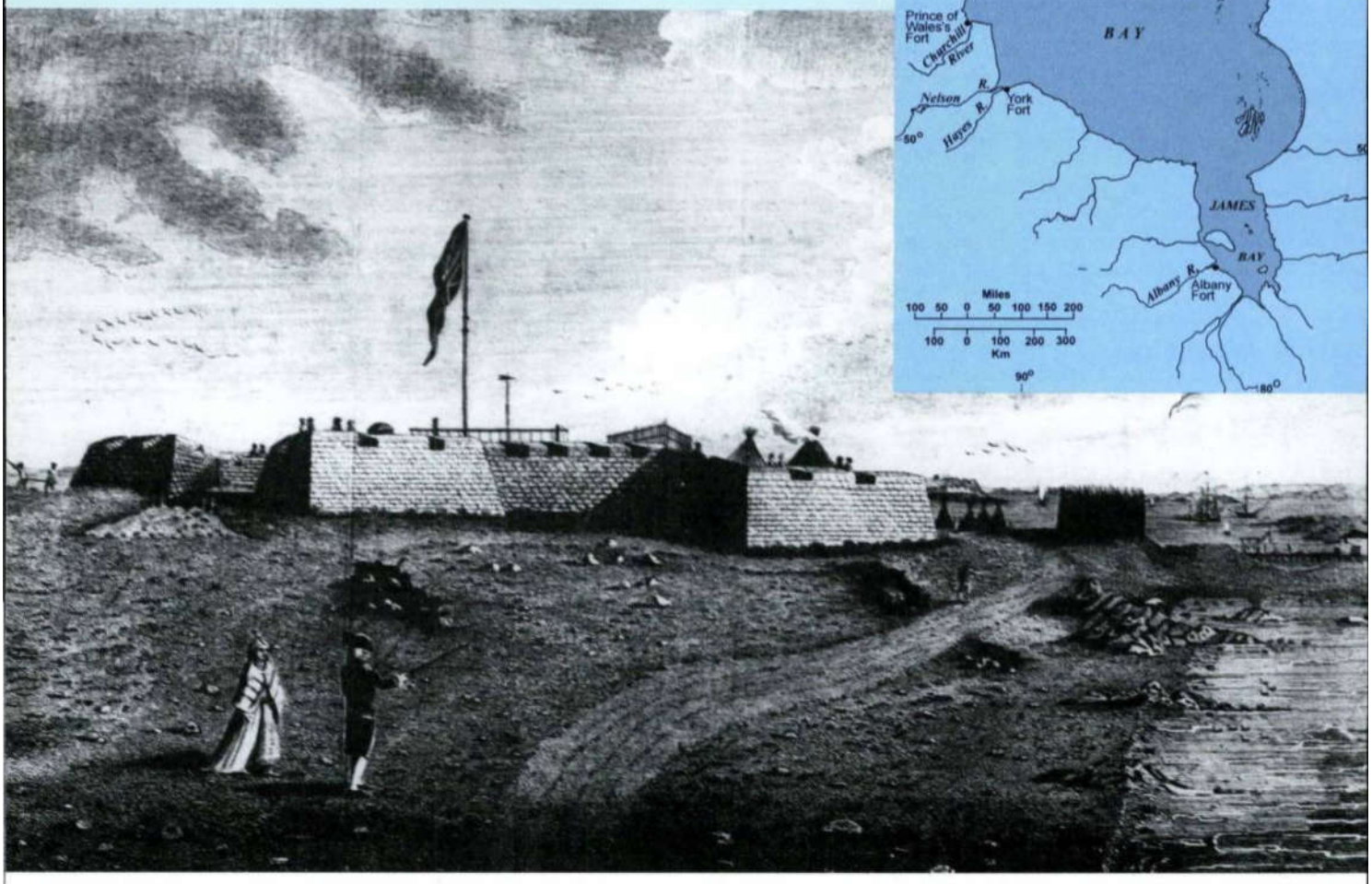
Marble Island from the air. Off the west coast of Hudson Bay at Rankin Inlet, Marble Island shines brilliant white in sunshine due to its deposits of quartzite.

In this remote land James Knight was no longer

A North West View of Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudsons Bay, North America by Samuel Hearne, 1777.

In 1717, James Knight built a permanent HBC post about eleven kilometres from the mouth of the Churchill River. Called Churchill Factory, its name was changed in 1719 to Prince of Wales's Fort. Fear of a sea attack by the French led the HBC beginning in 1731 to construct a stone edifice intended to become the most secure fortress in North America. In 1782, however, the French easily took it. A new fort was reestablished by the HBC upriver the following year.





an anonymous English gentleman. He was, instead, a type of king.

an exposed person subject to ten thousand bites per hour.

It was a land that James Knight apparently despised. "I never knowd no place so troublesom as this is here," he wrote. "This is a Misserable barren Place ... York Fort is badd but this is Tenn times worse ... for here is neither fish, Fowl nor Venison." *For here is neither fish, Fowl nor Venison.* This phrase repeats like a coda through the man's diaries and raises the question, why? Why spend more than half his life here? Why keep coming back? Knight was far from a young man, the vigour and the pains of this place taking their toll on him by the hour. Yet he returned. Even as a gentleman of some comfort, without obvious need of a wage, he returned and kept returning until, in the end, he disappeared altogether.

It is possible that in the barren and boreal stretches of Hudson Bay, James Knight encountered a landscape he could not resist. But beyond a fleeting, even charming description of the northern lights that he described as the "Petty Dancers," (likely a misspelling of *pretty*) he displayed no fascination with the land, no interest at all beyond the diary notes on this "Misserable barren Place [where] Wee hardly See a Goose ... nor never a fish."

It is more likely that the glinting seduction of gold had already entered Knight's imagination. We are told that the discovery of minerals, gold in particular, "was always his Topic." Henry Kelsey, who would play a role in Knight's demise, contemptuously referred to him as "the Goldfinder." Constantly grilling the natives for the location of the precious "yellow mettle," he reportedly "knew his way to this place as well as to his bedside," and did not go anywhere without his "Cruseables, Melting Potts, Borax &c for the trial of Minerals." When a native woman claimed to have seen deposits of gold on a western coastline, Knight confided, breathlessly: "Her eyes had seen it and her hands hadd fellt it."

This is the general historical consensus on James Knight – a goldfinder, a man smitten by the lure of precious metals, one of the first Englishmen to die in a futile search for gold. But there are other threads that make up the man. There is the landscape itself, situated on the perimeter of the known world. In this remote land James Knight was no longer an anonymous English gentleman. He was, instead, a type of king. His words, his decisions, were carried out as law. With a simple command he changed age-old native social arrangements and trading customs. He armed some tribes, but not others. He dispensed firearms, bolts of cloth, and quarts of "Indian Corn," but also brought disease and starvation. The death of these natives was, in his own words, "an Unrecoverable Loss to ye Company." In their deaths Knight mourned a drop in company profits. Years later in the horrifying seasons of 1716, as the natives starved to death all around him, he would write: "It requires a Great Deal of Care in a Man to Govern & Manage these People Rightly." The sentence, meant as a compliment to himself, stands as a credo of colonial racism, one of the first expressions on record of the white man's burden.

Following his return to England in 1700, James Knight was made a member of the London Committee. He was, by now, the company's undisputed expert on matters pertaining to the Bottom of the Bay. Remarkably, in 1711 at the age of seventy (or thereabouts), he agreed to return to Hudson Bay as governor. Ill health prevented him from taking on this assignment.

Three years later, in better health, Knight sailed once more for the bay to oversee the surrender of the forts that remained in French hands. Sailing with him was his deputy governor, Henry Kelsey, a skilled native linguist, described early on as "an active Lad delighting much in Indian company." He once dismissed a man for "beating and using all Indians Morosely." Knight would eventually level complaints against Kelsey; the complaints are lost but are thought to centre on his being, in Knight's view, too generous and sympathetic to the Indians. The coolness that developed between these two men would soon play a part in one of the bleakest tragedies in the history of northern exploration.

In November 1714 while at York Fort, Knight met a Chipewyan woman who had escaped from the Cree. She is known in history as Thanadelthur, although for some reason in his diaries Knight referred to her only as "the slave woman." Over the next several years he would rely on her as translator, guide, peacemaker, and torchbearer of his dreams of gold. In June 1715 he sent her, a contingent of natives, and an officer, William Stuart, on a mission to further company trade by promoting peace between the Cree and the northern Chipewyans. The expedition had another purpose. "Above all," Knight instructed Stuart, "you are to make a Strict Enquirry abt. there Mineralls ... if you find any Mineralls amongst them You must seem indifferent not letting them know ... it is of any value." He exhorted finally, "Bring back some of Every sort you see."

In late April Knight received a grim note from Stuart indicating that the party had eaten their dogs and were subsisting on moss. Stuart had not eaten in eight days. "Wee are in a Starving Condition at this time ... I do not think as I shall see you any more but I have a good heart." Despite these hardships Thanadelthur and the contingent returned a year later with some one hundred and sixty of her countrymen. Through her efforts peace had been established. William Stuart never recovered. Three years later Kelsey would write that Stuart had "been lunatick 3 or 4 times insomuch that wee have forct to tye him in his bed." He died insane at York Fort in 1719 at the age of forty-one, having been employed by the company since a boy of thirteen.

By 1715 circumstances had began to turn against James Knight. Early in the year, the spring breakup of the Hayes River occurred so swiftly that Knight and his men were forced to flee from the dinner table, and the fort was severely damaged. In the summer an incident occurred that precipitated the dreadful year to come. Captain Joseph Davis brought a supply ship into the bay, but mistook a signal fire for a star and returned to England without finding his way to York Fort.

By failing to supply trade goods for the Indians, some of whom had come hundreds of kilometres, Joseph Davis ensured their destruction. Unable to procure shot and pow-

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So confident was he of finding gold that he had on board with him specially constructed treasure chests to hold it.

der or muskets, the Chipewyans were unwilling to return home to face heavily armed Upland Cree, who had not agreed to peace. The following winter some were taken into the fort for safety. Living on European rations, in close quarters with Europeans, they began to sicken and die. Outside the palisades, their countrymen starved; a third of them died. Knight railed savagely against Joseph Davis for the rest of his life. The company fired Davis, and he remains on record in Canadian history as the man "remembered not for what he did, but for what he failed to do." Fortunately a supply ship arrived in September and a final catastrophe was barely averted.

By December 1716, Thanadelthur lay in York Fort, desperately ill. It is here, in his concern for her, that Knight reveals himself as something other than a heartless "Goldfinder." On February 5, 1717, when Thanadelthur died after a long illness (Knight personally attended her), he confided to his journal, "I am almost ready to break my heart." He closed the entry noting the weather was finest, but the day was "the most Melancholys't by the Loss of her." Here is the first sense of a vulnerable James Knight, almost pitiable in his grief. The more familiar portrait intrudes when he adds that her death "will be very Prejudiciall to the Company's Interest," and that he "gave a few odd things" to her countrymen "to wipe away their Sorrow."

By the winter of 1717, having watched the natives starve, having seen Thanadelthur die, Knight was taken sick and given to frequent fainting attacks. "For my part," he wrote, "I am weary of having the name of a Governor of this country." By September 1718, the name was no longer his and Knight left for England – a harsh, arduous sailing which nearly killed him. His tenure as governor was over. All that remained was his dreadful end.

Marble Island lies forty kilometres off the west coast of Hudson Bay at what, today, is Rankin Inlet. Approximately sixteen kilometres in length, it shines a brilliant white beneath open skies and, according to at least one legend, owes its creation to an Inuit woman's urge to relieve herself. This innocuous detail causes her to forfeit her life to a spirit in exchange for turning an iceberg into land. She perishes while crawling up on it. That land is today the shining quartzite of Marble Island and her death is the reason for an odd tradition: all those who land there for the first time must crawl up the shore on their hands and knees. Those who refuse are said to suffer terrible misfortune on the anniversary of their landing.

If anything can be said with certainty regarding James Knight and his doomed crews, it was that they were ignorant of this tradition. Arguably it was their ignorance of Inuit culture in general that accounts for what has been called the greatest mystery in Arctic exploration.

By March 1719, having been back in England less than four months, Knight was in front of the committee pressing them to outfit an expedition to search for gold and copper. At first reluctant, the committee agreed only after Knight threatened to seek outside financing. By June 4, Knight, outfitted with two ships, the *Albany* and *Discovery*, had received his sailing orders. So confident was he of finding gold that he had on board with him specially constructed treasure chests to hold it. The ships, carrying about thirty-five men between them, departed Gravesend harbour on June 4, 1719, and sailed into oblivion.

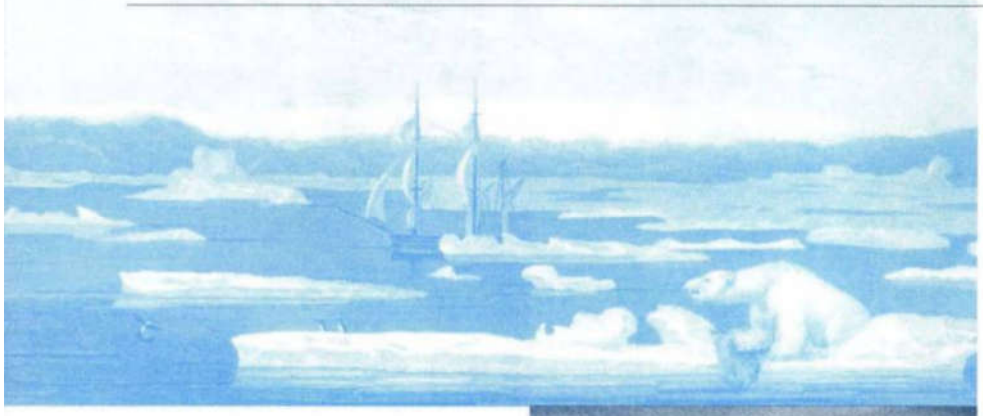
Today on the eastern corner of Marble Island the remnants of a stone building used to house his men, and a separate building for James Knight, are still visible. The *Albany* and *Discovery* lie in five fathoms of water, just offshore, although why the ships landed there remains a mystery. Bricks taken off the ships can still be found scattered about, as well as a circle of scoured earth – all that remains of some fifteen chaldrons (nearly twenty thousand litres) of offloaded coal.

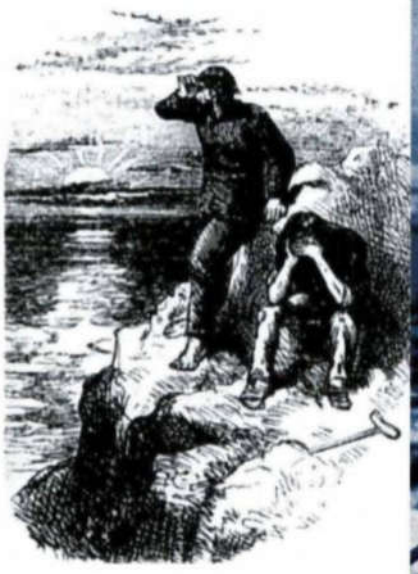
It has long been assumed that the *Albany* and *Discovery* were damaged at sea or wrecked attempting to enter the harbour at Marble Island in the autumn of 1719. It follows that Knight, his two captains, and crew attempted to winter, ran short of supplies, and died from a combination of cold, starvation, and scurvy. This interpretation was solidified by Samuel Hearne, who landed on the island in 1769 and interrogated several elderly Inuit. His recounting of how the ships were damaged entering the harbour, and how "sickness and famine occasioned such havock among the English" established itself in the popular imagination.

According to Hearne's account, after the second winter, visiting "Esquimaux" returned to find only five Englishmen alive. The sufferers were provided with seal flesh and whale blubber that "disordered them so much that 3 of them died in a few days and the other two, though very weak, made a shift to bury them." Reportedly these final two survivors made their way, daily, to a point of rock "and earnestly looked to the South and East as if in expectation of some vessels coming to their relief. At length one of the two died." The last man perished, "in attempting to dig a grave for his companion."

This account, with its insistence on the role of the Christian burial service and the stern warning against those who must face God's wrath, is a grim one. Even at first glance there are problems with it. How do thirty-five able British seamen land on an island and, over the course of three years, allow themselves to starve into extinction? These were far from incompetent men. Captain George Berley of the *Albany* was nothing if not quick thinking. When the French marched to the front gate of Albany Fort in 1704 and demanded entrance, Berley, on watch at the time, answered that the governor was sleeping, but that he himself would get the key. Instead he opened two portholes and discharged two cannons into the enemy and routed them.

David Vaughan, who captained the *Discovery*, was also no novice. In 1714 while the sloop *Eastmain* sailed into Hudson Bay, a sudden storm left the ship entirely sheathed in ice and on the verge of foundering. Vaughan was part of a crew that coolly sailed her directly onto the rocks, and saved themselves. "You cannot have a soberer or brisker man," concluded Knight. It could be argued that with these two in charge of the ships and Knight as commander-in-chief, the





COURTESY BILL GOWAR

Above: A Victorian representation of the last survivors of the Knight expedition to Marble Island.

Right: A piece of the wreckage from one of Knight's ships on Marble Island.

expedition was the most experienced to ever enter Hudson Bay.

Perhaps the largest hole in the Hearne account is the absence of graves. Examinations conducted by Alberta anthropologist Owen Beattie and historian John Geiger conducted over four years in the late 1980s and early 1990s revealed few traces of human bones and nothing resembling a graveyard, as indicated from the Hearne story. There is no evidence of the burying of men as they succumbed one by one to starvation, frostbite, and scurvy. Just as telling was a diver's examination of the foundered ships, which indicated they were not damaged, but had made harbour safely. The successful offloading of materials, including a prefabricated house for Knight, thirty-five hundred bricks, and a massive amount of coal, indicates a well-equipped crew preparing to survive a harsh winter.

Exactly what went wrong remains unknown, although there is evidence that the ultimate cause of the tragedy lay in a combination of intrigues and an appalling and fatal ignorance of the "Eskemays." Despite the competence of his men, despite his own vast experience, the Knight expedition, with the exception of Vaughan, who had brief contact a year earlier, was entirely ignorant of the Inuit. All Knight knew of the "Eskemays" came from the Cree, traditional enemies who viewed the northerners with terror. Knight knew little more than the commonplace fabulation that they drank their victims' blood "the way an Englishman drinks his ale." Perhaps the most fatal shortcoming would involve the total ignorance of the language.

Given this background it is possible to formulate another scenario of what happened on Marble Island. It involves two civilizations making contact, moving cautiously toward each other on a wind-smoothed surface of quartzite. One knows nothing about the other. Under these circumstances something goes wrong: a false move is made, an item taken, perhaps a musket discharged, voices get raised, a few men surge forward. Accusations are

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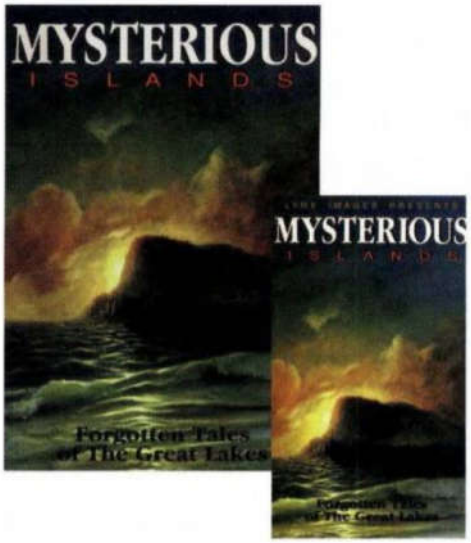

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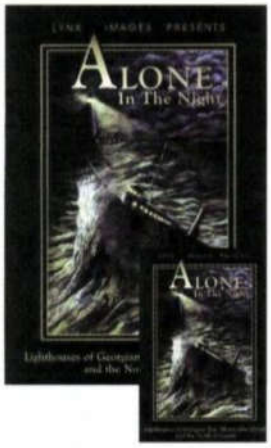

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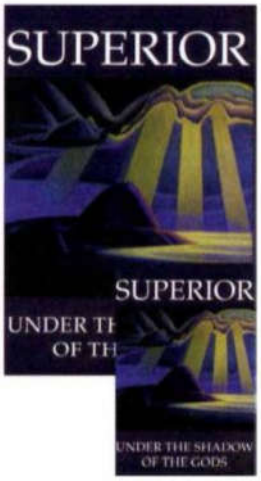

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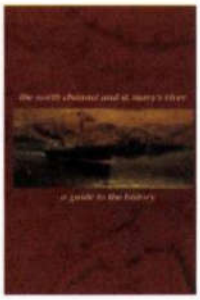

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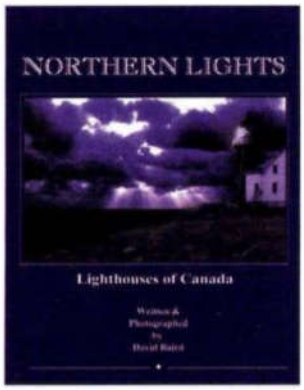

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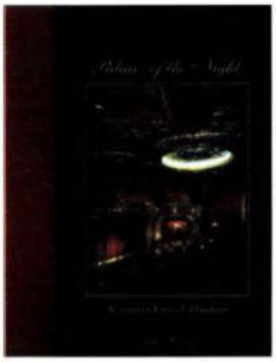

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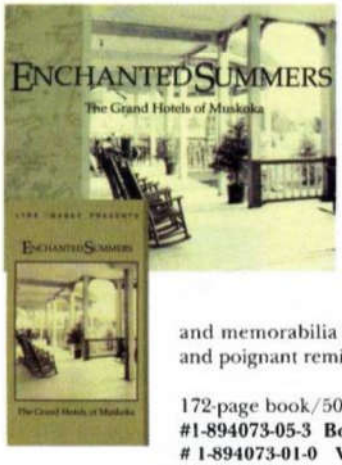

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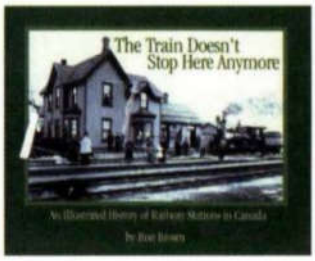

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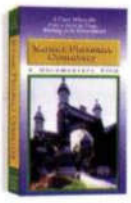

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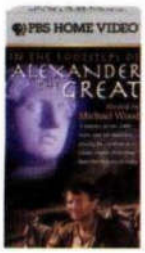

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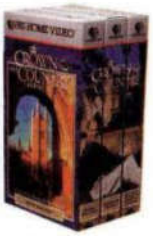

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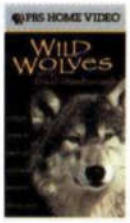

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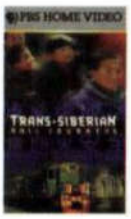

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levelled but not understood, amends are offered, words of appeasement, again, tragically, not understood. An Inuk points his finger, a British sailor panics, slashes out with a sabre, leaving the "green" scar, the visible proof of European presence carved on the face of another civilization. A fight erupts, breaks off. The Inuit retreat to the western rim, the English remain in the east. A standoff has been reached. The diplomacy, the tact, the language required to resolve this conflict is entirely lacking. Knight, perhaps eighty years old, was not like Kelsey, "a man who delighted much in Indian company." His own proud and testy nature would work against a resolution. The English, he reasons, are well armed. They can look after themselves. What need do they have of the "Eskemay?" In the end the need was absolute, in particular the need to comprehend Inuit diet.

The relationship between fresh meat and scurvy was only dimly understood in Knight's time, and Knight probably understood it as well as anyone. His expedition had packed enough meat to last a winter. Enormous quantities of salt taken on board indicate the men expected to find fresh game. Knight had a great deal of experience with fresh game. He knew the deer and moose, the partridge, the goose. Conceivably he expected to find these creatures north of latitude 64°. Instead he found walrus, seal, whale. Tellingly, Knight is on record to the effect that an Englishman is not a dog, he does not eat his meat raw. This inability to fathom the ways of the Inuit, the unadaptable clinging to British habits, would have killing effects. Over the winter the supplies of meat would run out, the island's few hares could not support thirty-five men for long. Even the ability to hunt may have been restricted by the Inuit. The very people whose guidance and intelligence was so desperately required were now enemies, encamped on the other side. Slowly at first, then quickly, the debilitating effects of scurvy would make themselves felt. Teeth loosen and drop, bleeding begins beneath the skin, cartilage degenerates until a man is unable to lift himself from the ground. Under these circumstances the English muskets would count for nothing. Tragically, James Knight and his men, surrounded by animals whose flesh is filled with ascorbic acid, may have perished, at least in part, because of the absence of it in their diets.

During the time that Knight and his men were perishing on Marble Island, Henry Kelsey sent a ship north. Its captain, John Hancock, returned in September 1720 with news that the "Goldfinders" had met with the "Eskemays" and "spoilt our trade." The remark is problematic. Does it mean the Inuit, flush with goods supplied by Knight's men, required no further trade? Or does it mean they had become so angered with the men on Marble Island that they would have nothing to do with English traders? Either way, the remark reveals the sort of coldness Knight was capable of arousing.

The tensions that existed between Knight and Kelsey were significant. Kelsey, who had succeeded Knight as governor, was the one man empowered to undertake a rescue. In April 1721 with Englishmen conceivably still alive on Marble Island, Kelsey sailed north up the west coast of Hudson Bay and turned back, noting casually in his journal "I bore away because ye winds did not favour my intentions." The friction between these two men was so obvious that company officials ordered the expedition's captains not to sail south of latitude 64°, except under "Utmost Extremity Only to preserve Shipps Sloop & Men's lives." The area south of 64° was the jurisdiction of Henry Kelsey. Knight was under orders that should he encounter Kelsey or any of his men to show them "all Possible Respect and neither Molest or Hinder them."

By 1721, articles from the Knight expedition began ominously showing up in the possession of Inuit and the natives with whom they traded. Kelsey's failure to launch a rescue operation the following year is equally unconscionable, and likely based on malice. The complaints that Knight brought against him were in Kelsey's term "Odious" and undermined a reputation he considered "more Valuable yn Life itselfe."

It is possible the truth, or at least one of the truths, of the Knight expedition was to be found in accounts of a lost journal belonging to Hudson's Bay Company employee Master John Scroggs, who was sent up the northwest coast of Hudson Bay from Churchill in 1722 to locate copper mines. The interpretation of Scroggs as an incompetent navigator has tended to cast doubt on the man's findings. Nonetheless it is reported in July 1722 by Richard Staunton, factor at Churchill, that Scroggs "doth Affirm that Every Man was Killed by the Eskemoes wch I am heartily sorry for their hard fortune." Scroggs also reported seeing in the Marble Island area an Inuk man with "a large Scar on his Cheek, like a Cut with a Cutless, and at that time a Green Wound." There being no other Europeans in this area but the Knight expedition, the observation is telling and chilling.

In 1724, the Hudson's Bay Company closed the books on the doomed expedition. The *Albany* and *Discovery* were written off as complete losses. No rescue attempt or investigation was launched. Joseph Robson, a critic of the Hudson's Bay Company, would soon suggest "the company did not value the loss of ship and sloop" as long as James Knight was gotten rid of. Knight's will was executed the same year. In it he bequeaths his son "one shilling and no more he having been already advanced by me in the world Considerably more than my Circumstances could allow of."

This is the sort of spite and vanity James Knight put forth and the same spite and vanity that he ultimately received in return. Even the mound of coal unloaded by Knight's men was not immune to it. Ransacked over the years by visiting whalers, it was finally set on fire by an American captain for no reason but to spite the British. The scoured ring is still visible. The morbid fascination of Marble Island with its Inuit and whalers' graves, its ghosts, its bloody history, its legends and blistering winds, lives on. There are Inuit today who will not land there.

As for Knight's dreams of mineral wealth, they unfolded into the North Rankin Nickel Mine established in the 1950s. Situated on the mainland west of Marble Island, it was built to meet the nickel demands created by the Korean war and closed a few years later. Today the rusted remains of a derelict concentrator dominate the skyline – the last visible reminder of a man and his tragic search for riches.

Peter Unwin is a Toronto writer with a special interest in the North and the Canadian frontier. His first novel, *Nine Bells for a Man*, has just been published by Dundurn Press. His profiles of Grey Owl and Pauline Johnson appeared in the *Beaver* in 1999.

The Great Canadian Foot Race

In 1921, for a lark, two Haligonians decided to walk across Canada. Two Dartmouth men challenged them, and the walk turned into a race. Then a married couple entered the picture. The race to Vancouver became a national event. The surprise is who won. ■ by Mark Reynolds

Most people, when they decide to go across Canada, will either take a six-hour plane flight, drive at their own pace, or, if they are feeling nostalgic, perhaps hop on the train. But there are a select few that do the journey on their own power. Terry Fox attempted to run the distance in 1980, and Steve Fonyo completed the journey for him five years later. Rick Hansen crossed the country in a wheelchair, and others have done it using bicycles or Rollerblades or even small aircraft.

In each of these cases though, the journey was undertaken with a support crew, usually following behind in a van, with the aid and publicity of one charity organization or another.

What is not very well known is that the feat was accomplished in 1921, in what was called at the time "the most wonderful athletic event ever staged in Canada," during a foot race from Halifax to Vancouver in a record 134 days – a record set by the only woman participating in the journey, along with her husband.

The race did not start as such. Two young men, Charles Burkman and Sid Carr, had decided to go to Vancouver to seek their fortunes. They chose to walk, to see the country at their own pace, planning to complete the journey in a leisurely seven months and fund it by selling postcards of themselves for the respectable price of ten cents. They also agreed to send back dispatches to the Halifax *Herald* and *Evening Mail*.

Even before they left, the *Herald* gave Burkman and Carr a great deal of coverage, running the story on the front page for almost a week. The publicity had its effect. "The feat is already attracting attention," the paper stated on January 17, the day the hikers left, "and Burkman and Carr have received many flattering offers should they make their destination. Moving picture men are in town and will take special pictures of the start this morning at the city parade."

In addition to the "flattering offers" and being featured in newsreels across the country, the two sojourners soon received a challenge. In the spirit of sportsmanship and cross-harbour rivalry, two Dartmouth hikers, Jack and Clifford Behan, father and son, decided that they wished to race Burkman and Carr across the country. Both were "returned men," each having been attached to the Sixty-Third Halifax Rifles during the Great War. In addition, Jack was a well-known Dartmouth postman. The two showed up in the *Herald* offices on January 21 with a letter of introduction from Mayor H.O. Simpson of Dartmouth.

"We are out to overtake Burkman and Carr and I am convinced we will do so before they reach Montreal," Jack Behan said before leaving on January 25, eight days after Burkman and Carr. "Once we are on an even footing with them it will be an easy matter to take the lead and keep it."

Not willing to take such boasting lying down, Burkman and Carr cabled back that "nobody will overtake us to any-place between here and Vancouver unless we break our legs."

This was not destined to be a two-horse race, however. With the suffragette movement becoming a powerful force in Canadian life, women were less willing to be shut out of any aspect of society – including mad dashes across the country. Soon after the Behans set off, Jennie Dill entered the race with her husband Frank.

"It was I who first suggested the trip although my husband did not need to be coaxed," Jennie told the *Herald*. "We are prepared to make the try and you can rest assured that when we start a thing we'll finish it."

The Dills started off on February 1. The race now had a dramatically different flavour. Carr, frustrated that his sightseeing tour had turned into a contest, dropped out of the race partway through New Brunswick, leaving Burkman to fend for himself in the Canadian wilderness.

The best way to get across the country at the time was not the road system, which had yet to see the true explosion of the automobile age, but the railway. Burkman was now forced to plod along the tracks alone, sometimes for days at a time, seeing nothing but trees and snow.

He took the loss of his partner well. On his arrival in Saint John January 30, after a thirty-eight-kilometre trek from Hampton, New Brunswick, the *Standard* wrote, "Mr. Burkman was not at all fatigued by his day's efforts. He proceeded to doll up and became a prominent figure at the Strand in the evening, where he proved as fancy a stepper as he is a pedestrian."

Both Charles Burkman and Jennie Dill were heroes of the day. Burkman was dubbed the lone hiker, and was greeted

Right: Journey's end. Frank Dill, Jennie Dill, Jack Behan, Clifford Behan, and Charles Burkman pose in front of the *Vancouver Sun* offices, June 1921. The newspaper incorrectly counts Burkman's 150-day walk ten days short.

Halifax Hikers At Vancouver
VER DAILY SUN
FIVE trans-continental walkers snapped in front of the Vancouver Sun office just before leaving for Montreal. Left to right are Mr. and Mrs. Frank Dill the Behans, father and son, and Charles Burkman.
The Behans arrived in Vancouver first, having completed the journey in 138 days., but the Dills, who were second to arrive, made a record, having walked the 3786 miles in 134 days. Twenty-year-old Burkman took 140 days to make the trip, but he lost several days when his feet gave out, and he also spent three days with his parents in Port Arthur. Burkman claims to have lost 20 days altogether.
Mrs. Dill is continuing to Halifax by train, but her husband plans along with Burkman to compete against the Behans in a walk from Montreal to Halifax. Sydney Carr started from Halifax with Burkman, but quit at Petitcodiac, N. B.
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warmly in every town and village he passed through. Jennie and Frank Dill were swarmed by admirers wherever they went, as all wished to see the "frail woman" who was undertaking such a gruelling journey. The frail woman was later to kill a menacing timber wolf with a single shot in the wilds of northern Ontario.

Despite all their brave talk, it soon became apparent to the Behans that they were not going to be able to overtake Burkman by Montreal. In fact, they reached that city some days after he did, while Burkman was in Ottawa, being entertained by Halifax MP and Minister of Labour F.B. McCurdy and recently elected prime minister Arthur Meighen. But they were consistently gaining on him, as were the Dills. After some neck-and-neck racing through Ontario, the Behans passed Burkman for good in Port Arthur, Ontario. The Dills did the same at Broadview, Manitoba. Though Burkman continued to hike to Vancouver, the race was really between the Dills, led by the impressive Jennie, and the Behans.

All the racers were suffering near the end of the race. They were fatigued, endured muscle spasms, nosebleeds in the heat, and fly bites after the rain. All had lost weight, but none mentioned giving up. As Burkman said after being passed by the Dills, "Some might criticize me for letting a woman pass me, but few know what I have done since leaving Halifax. It has been a hard, long, lonesome grind ... but I decided to stick and stick I will until I reach Vancouver."

Burkman did stick until Vancouver, making the final stretch in better time than either of the other teams, but it was not enough. He arrived in Vancouver 150 days after leaving Halifax. The Behans, though arriving first on June 11, were still four days off the pace set by the Dills, who got to Vancouver on June 14.

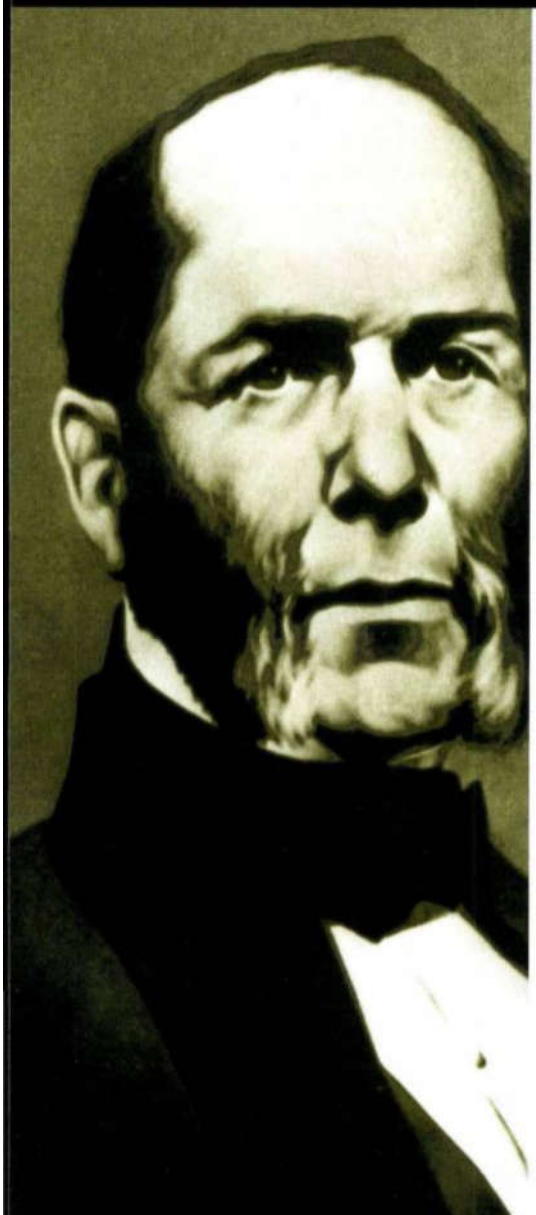
Upon arriving with her husband, Jennie Dill, who had been the star of the show, received a bouquet and a letter from Mayor John Parker of Halifax that read: "Congratulations on behalf of the citizens of Halifax upon your wonderful accomplishment in walking from Canada's Eastern Gateway to the Pacific Coast. You are the only woman who has accomplished such a feat, and in record time, an honour which carries its own reward. You have won the admiration of all for your wonderful pluck and imagination."

None of the hikers were to receive any reward for their accomplishment. In fact, all three lost money on the enterprise. Jack Behan tried to organize another race from Montreal back to Halifax, but this fell through when Charles Burkman refused to participate and Frank Dill became ill. None of the racers went on to lasting fame. Charles Burkman lived the rest of his days in Montreal, while the Behans, who seemed somewhat bitter about their defeat, moved to the U.S. to seek their fortunes. Frank and Jennie Dill returned to Halifax and remained active in the sporting community, but did not capitalize on their newfound fame. Frank passed away in 1927. Jennie later remarried. She died in 1941.

Mark Reynolds is a freelance journalist living in Montreal.

by Elizabeth Haigh

Bright Lights & Skull



Though he farmed, then later trained in medicine in London and practised in New Brunswick, Abraham Gesner (1797–1864) was passionately fond of geology. His avocational pursuit soon supplanted his professional employment and he dedicated himself to the scientific experiments that would extract a highly prized lighting fuel from base rock. His originality and hard work were not always well respected, though – in his lifetime, or afterwards. Indeed, it wasn't until sixty-nine years after his death that the oil industry, which profited from his talent, formally recognized his vital contribution.

COURTESY HAROLD E. WRIGHT

In 1933, when the Imperial Oil Company erected a granite shaft over the grave of Abraham Gesner, who had died in Halifax in April 1864, it identified him as "the American inventor of the process of kerosene oil" and credited him "for his important contribution to the Oil Industry." In 1969, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada erected a memorial in front of the house in which he was born at Chipman Corner in the Annapolis Valley. It claims that "he first refined kerosene in 1846, and promoted its manufacture in New York in 1853–63." In fact, Gesner developed two products that he called "kerosene." The first one, in 1849, was an illuminating gas and it earned him a fortune. Three years later, he had lost it. In New York in 1853, he developed kerosene oil, which made him a second fortune. In 1862, he was in jail in Saint John – for debt.

Gesner learned how to break down or "crack" coal and related substances in a makeshift laboratory that he attached to his family farm at Chipman Corner, where he had been forced to return with his wife and seven sons in 1843 after the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly cancelled his position of provincial geologist. A reluctant farmer, he dabbled in many things, including gas extraction. At first he simply repeated experiments that he had observed Michael Faraday perform in 1826 at the Royal Institution in London, where he had gone to take medical courses. But treating the ill was one job he liked even less than farming. By the summer of 1846, he had refined his chemical technique sufficiently to demonstrate coal-gas light to a meeting of the Mechanics Institute in Charlottetown.

It was timely work. By the late eighteenth century, in an era of intense industrial expansion and experimentation, some men had observed that when heat is applied to coal in a sealed vessel from which air is excluded, the coal decomposes into a variety of oils, gases, and tars. Some of these oils and gases burned brightly. This set other men to develop lamps in which that burning could be controlled. Between 1820 and 1860, the lighting of streets and houses was transformed. The candles and primitive animal-oil lamps commonly used early in the century could not disguise the night. By the end of the century, most homes were brightly lit with cheap and abundant gas or oil.

The process of "cracking" or dry distillation of coal and other hydrocarbons requires a retort (a closed laboratory vessel with an outlet tube) followed by a condenser and a receiver. Heat applied directly to the retort produces emissions that are condensed in long straight or helical tubes, which are kept more or less cooled. At low heat, a series of oils of different specific gravities are condensed out. At 400° or 425°

duggery

Nova Scotia's Abraham Gesner revolutionized the lighting of cities in the nineteenth century. He refined kerosene, a fuel cleaner, cheaper, and brighter burning than the smoky, smelly oils of the day. But in some quarters he got no thanks for his ingenuity.

Celsius, gas is given off. Distilled oils, in particular, must be treated with strong acids to remove impurities that, if they remain, produce offensive odours. The distillation products vary somewhat depending upon the raw material put into the retort. Soft or bituminous coals crack more efficiently than hard ones. Many solid or semisolid bituminous hydrocarbons such as asphaltum (naturally occurring asphalt) and petroleum may be treated similarly. By the 1860s, many illuminating gases and oils were on the market. The differences in their quality were determined by the raw material, the temperatures applied, the design of the apparatus, and the method used to remove impurities. All of these variables were the subject of patents. Gesner claimed for himself more than two thousand experiments having to do with the manufacture and purification of gases and oils distilled from coal, petroleum, and other materials.

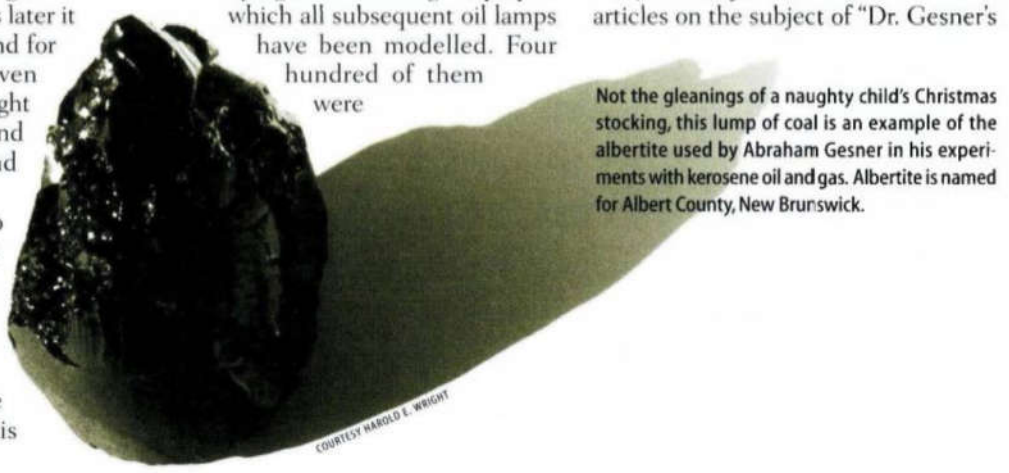
By the 1820s, gas lit the streets of London. By the 1860s, it had been improved enough to light homes without making people uncomfortable or ill. Gas lighting was introduced into Halifax in March 1840 when Nova Scotia's legislative assembly incorporated the Halifax Gas Light and Water Company. Four years later it split into two companies and for approximately the next seven decades, the Halifax Gas Light Company manufactured and supplied gas for home and street lighting.

Gesner, who moved to Sackville near Halifax in 1848, tried to sell his services as a chemist or consultant to the Halifax Gas Light Company, believing that he could improve the quality of its product. His secret was a seam of shiny bitumen or asphaltum that he had first observed in 1839 while examining the geology near Hillsborough in Albert County, located on Shepody Bay in southeastern New Brunswick. He discovered that when he put the asphaltum into his retort, the gas generated burned more clearly and brightly than that obtained from brown coal. Gesner presented Andrew MacKinlay, the chairman of the Halifax Gas Light Company, with a copy of the appropriate geological report and in January 1849, he wrote to Hillsborough requesting that ten or fifteen pounds of "shepody pitch" be sent to him and to MacKinlay. The material was dubbed "albertite."

However, soon after, Gesner appears to have decided to go into business on his own. He might have been persuaded to this by Thomas Cochrane, the tenth Earl of Dundonald, who, from March 1848 until his retirement in May 1851, was admiral of the fleet of North America and the West Indies. Evidence suggests that he and Gesner met in 1849 and they remained in contact until Dundonald's death in 1860. Dundonald encouraged Gesner's experiments. While in jail in 1814 for stock fraud, the earl passed his time developing an oil-burning lamp upon which all subsequent oil lamps have been modelled. Four hundred of them were introduced to light the streets of a London parish, only to be displaced a few years later by gas lighting. Dundonald employed Gesner to experiment with a form of Trinidad pitch, which behaved much like albertite when distilled, producing a clean, brightly burning gas. A quantity sufficient to light a single building could be made on a kitchen stove. Better still, asphaltum, whether albertite or Trinidad pitch, yielded more than twice as much gas as the same quantity of coal. From the Greek word *keroselaion*, meaning wax-oil, Gesner named the product "keroselene," soon contracted to kerosene.

For Gesner, 1850 was a crucial year. Possibly with Dundonald's financial backing, he set out to market his kerosene gas. In January 1850 he was in New York where he took out two United States patents, one for his gas-extraction process from "compact and fluid bitumen, asphaltum, chapapote, or mineral pitch" and the other for a retort. He advertised the gas and exhibited it in rooms that he rented in a boarding house. Later that month, he addressed the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Science on the subject.

Between February 9 and December 7, *Scientific American* carried four articles on the subject of "Dr. Gesner's



COURTESY HAROLD E. WRIGHT

Not the gleanings of a naughty child's Christmas stocking, this lump of coal is an example of the albertite used by Abraham Gesner in his experiments with kerosene oil and gas. Albertite is named for Albert County, New Brunswick.

American newspapers praised the brilliance, freedom from odour, lack of residue, and relativ
So brigh

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Great Pitch Lake of Trinidad, an illustration from Abraham Gesner's 1861 *A practical treatise on coal petroleum and other distilled oils*. Gesner experimented with Trinidad pitch, which behaved much like albertite when distilled, producing a clean, brightly burning gas.

Patent Kerosene Gas Light" and two on New Brunswick's asphaltum. Although their author is not identified, it was almost certainly Gesner himself. American newspapers praised the brilliance, freedom from odour, lack of residue, and relative cheapness of kerosene. "The Patent Kerosene gas affords the cheapest, safest, and most agreeable light ever used," enthused the *New York Herald*. And it was simple to produce:

> *A hollow cylinder, or case, filled three quarters full of bitumen, was inserted in a red hot retort, in which it was immediately liquified, the gas generated from it and conveyed through water without any purification whatever, to the gasometer, whence it was conveyed by pipes to the burners.*

On a larger scale, with a few inexpensive alterations, the article continued, it could be manufactured in existing gas works. No doubt with his prompting, American papers variously described Gesner as "a Professor of Chemistry and Geology, whose name has become familiar to men of science in this country," as "a chemist of some reputation also in Europe," and as "a distinguished chemist of Halifax, now in the employ of the British Government." In June, Gesner sold his patent to the Washington Gas Company, which proceeded to light the capital city with kerosene gas. A New York firm was authorized to manufacture his retort and to dispose of the patent rights for its use of the apparatus. Gesner's eldest son Henry went there to act as his father's agent.

Back in Halifax in February, Gesner paid seven pounds and five shillings for a Nova Scotia patent to manufacture kerosene gas from asphaltum. The attorney general, who was also the president of the Halifax Gas Light Company, signed it. Soon after, Gesner filed two letters patent in Prince Edward Island and applied for a patent in England. He ordered a retort and gasometer to be made, and to demonstrate his product, he fitted up an apartment in a building belonging to a Mrs. Loveland on the corner of Hollis and Sackville streets. The bright new light became the talk of Halifax.

Also in February, soon after he received his patents, a bill to incorporate a Kerosene Gas Light Company was presented to the Nova Scotia legislative assembly. Some powerful businessmen backed Gesner. The *Halifax Guardian* encouraged the bill's swift passage, the *Acadian Recorder* claimed that it served the gouging Halifax Gas Light Company right, and the *Halifax Sun* taunted the "old fellows at the South End" to "pile on your coals and dawn on our darkness, or we fear it is all over with your monopoly."

But it was a tight little town and the "old fellows at the South End" did not take kindly to interlopers. The directors of the Halifax Gas Light Company launched a petition against the Kerosene Gas Light Company. In March, they issued two reports to their shareholders, condemning Gesner and his gas. No copies appear to have survived so we must infer their contents from Gesner's responses addressed "To the Directors, Committee and Shareholders of the Halifax Gas Company" that were published in the *Nova Scotian*. Gesner's opponents argued that kerosene gas would be no cheaper than coal gas, that it had been manufactured as far back as 1823, and that Gesner had made no discovery because albertite was merely a type of coal. In defence of

cheapness of kerosene. ...
were the lights that they attracted crowds. And the cost was about half as much as coal gas.

their monopoly, they argued that "one company can supply gas at a cheaper rate than two companies." In frustration Gesner wrote that "such a spirit as you have manifested towards me [has never] been tolerated in any civilized community."

Some Halifax businesses, cooperating with Gesner, simply bypassed the Halifax Gas Light Company and manufactured their own kerosene gas. In October, two adjoining buildings along Hollis Street occupied by a Mr. Morton and Mr. Gossip, a chemist and a bookseller, commenced lighting with kerosene gas. The gasometer and other apparatus were in an adjoining building. So bright were the lights that they attracted crowds. And the cost was about half as much as coal gas.

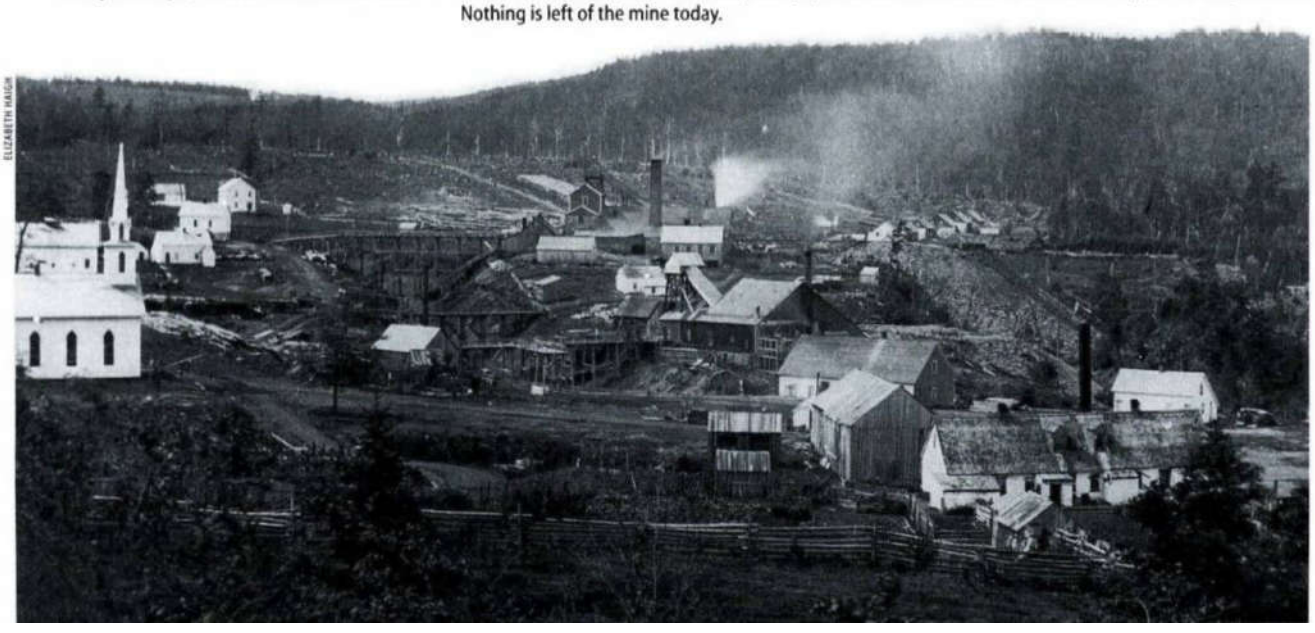
In July 1851, two local businessmen in the small Nova Scotia port of Liverpool purchased Gesner's patent rights for kerosene gas. At first they had only a portable furnace and gasometer, but they intended to construct a proper gas works to provide light for the town. Since the port had an active trade with the West Indies, they imported Trinidad pitch as their raw material.

Early in 1851, Gesner and Dundonald set out to persuade Nova Scotia legislators that kerosene gas would be a better source of fuel for lighthouse beacons than the usual smelly and smoky animal oils. But manufacturing and storing gas in remote and stormy locations was a major problem. Attempts to use coal gas in lighthouses in Scotland in 1837 and in Yorkshire in 1847 had both been abandoned. But Joseph Howe, the commissioner for lights, and Governor John Harvey were inclined to encourage Gesner's experiments, specifying, however, that he would get expenses only. He practised by locating a light on Citadel Hill, a military fortification that overlooks Halifax Harbour. Gesner described that trial in a letter to Howe in the spring of 1851:

> *I conveyed to the signal station at the citadel, 20 cubic feet of kerosene gas, contained in an india rubber bag, and with it 60 feet of gutta percha tube, with a common lanthorne [lantern], supplied with the necessary gas fittings, and a single burner. – The tube was connected with the gas bag, (under sutiable* [sic] *pressure) and with the bottom of the lanthorne, where it serves for a downhall. The lanthorne was lighted on the ground, and hoisted up to the yard arm, and hauled up and down with all possible rapidity during three quarters of an hour. On Thursday evening, the lanthorne, when hoisted, was exposed to a strong breeze, but in all the motion thus produced, the light was perfectly steady. The density of the gas is such, that 20 cubic feet will supply 10 hours burning, and one man can carry the gas, the fittings, and the lanthorne.*

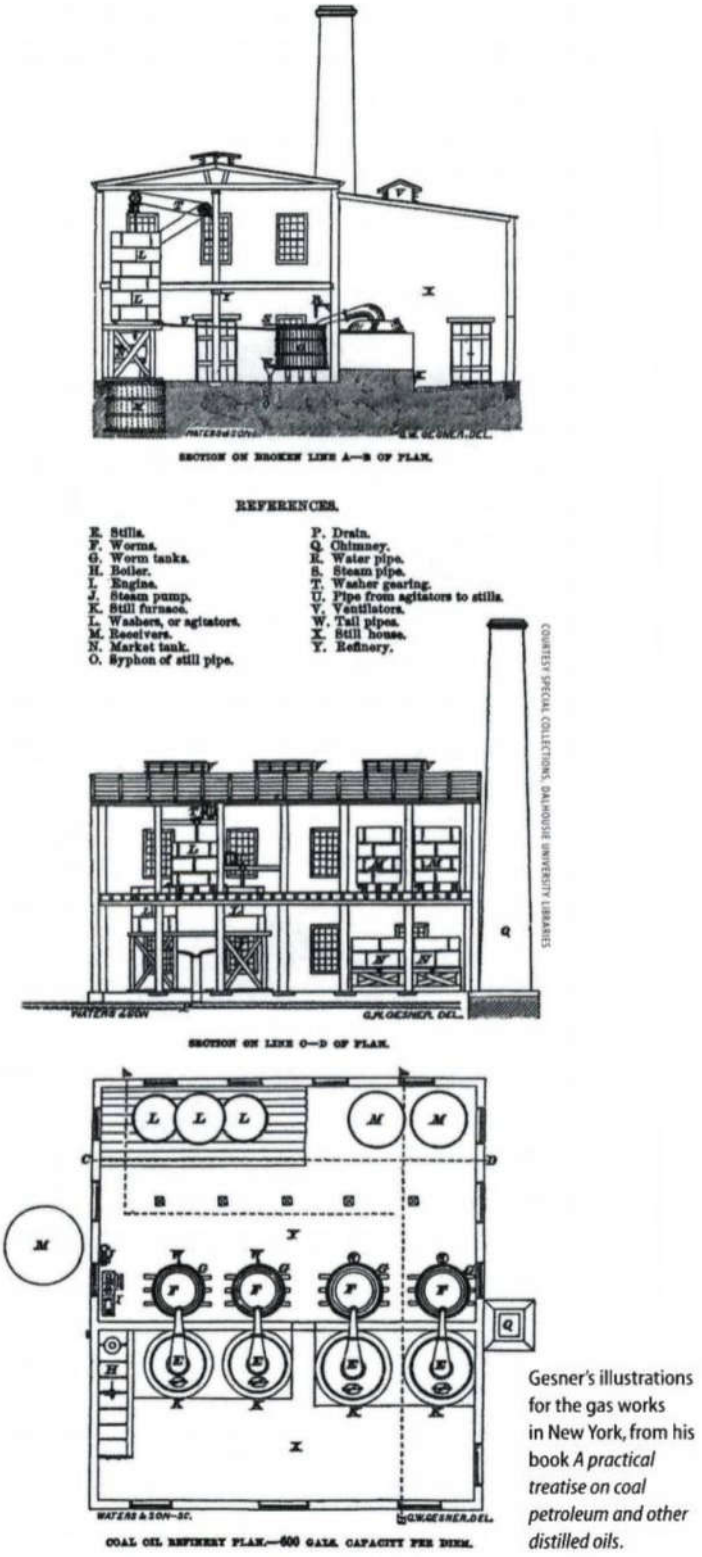
Howe instructed the commissioner of a lighthouse at Maugher's Beach on McNab's Island at the entrance to Halifax Harbour to give Gesner control for one month. A gas manufacturing works in Dartmouth manufactured the kerosene gas. In October, the experi-

Gesner recognized the potential value of the bitumen seam in southeastern New Brunswick's Hillsborough County, but before he could purchase property in 1850, it was bought by another party, who formed the Albert Mining Company. This 1870 photograph shows the extent of the mine twenty years after purchase. Nothing is left of the mine today.



ELIZABETH HAUCH

The handbills claimed that his gas was a humbug, that it would choke the pipes, explode, suffocate the inhabitants, and destroy the sight.



Gesner's illustrations for the gas works in New York, from his book *A practical treatise on coal petroleum and other distilled oils.*

ment was declared a success. The light was more uniform than oil light and the yearly cost was projected at a mere nineteen pounds compared to more than seventy-three pounds for oil. Howe was pleased enough with the result to recommend its use on Prince Edward Island.

But despite five more commissions, kerosene gas for lighthouses never caught on due to safety concerns and complex repairs. Gesner's kerosene oil came to be used instead only a few years later because it could be transported and stored so much more easily. Although Gesner was invited to introduce kerosene gas into three new lighthouses planned for the summer of 1852, he demurred. By then, he was embroiled in legal proceedings in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Gesner's legal battles, both of which he launched early in 1851, had to do with the asphaltum seam of Hillsborough County. Realizing its potential value, he set out to get control of it late in 1850. In November 1849, two brothers named Duffy had paid five pounds for a twenty-five-year mining licence on the property containing the seam. They were selling the albertite locally as coal, but it was a nuisance. At high temperatures it melted, clogging up stoves and coating instruments. In October 1850, Gesner offered the Duffys £5,250 for their mining licence. But he was scooped – by hours – by one William Cairns, who formed the Albert Mining Company.

Not about to give up a fortune without a fight, Gesner tried another tack. For £4,000, he purchased a twenty-one-year lease on twenty-eight hectares of the land itself and hired a mining crew. In January 1851, his men dug a pit approximately one hundred metres away from that of Cairns. Within hours, twenty armed men hired by Cairns forced Gesner's crew to leave, boarded up the pit, and left an armed watch. Gesner sued the Albert Mining Company for expulsion from his own land, for its spoliation, and for unlawful removal of asphaltum. He argued that asphaltum, including albertite, is not coal and hence exempt from the provisions of the law concerning mineral rights.

About this time, he asked a lawyer for the Halifax Gas Light Company to approach its directors on his behalf "to request a reconciliation," offering the company his patent rights for the manufacture of gas. There was no more talk of a Kerosene Gas Light Company. The directors rebuffed him, and by the spring of 1851 they were openly manufacturing gas from albertite purchased from the Albert Mining Company. Gesner obtained a writ of trover against the Halifax Gas Light Company and sued them for the use of *his* albertite.

In both trials, the central issue was the question of whether or not albertite is coal. Expert witnesses testified on both sides. The trial of Gesner versus the Halifax Gas Light Company opened on July 25, 1851, and lasted for eleven days. A jury found for Gesner declaring albertite to be asphaltum, but the judge set aside the verdict and granted a new trial on the grounds that the jury had been misdi-

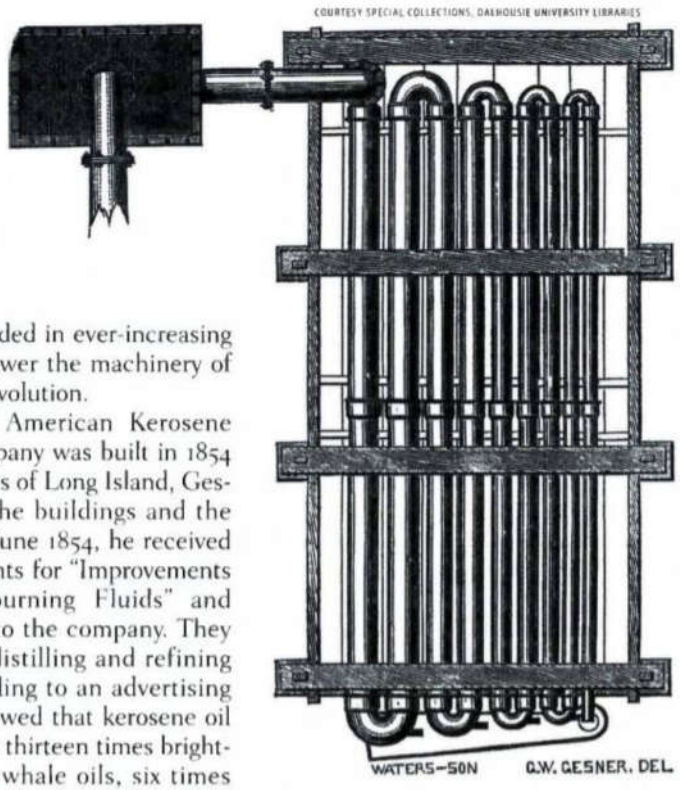


Illustration for the crude-oil condenser apparatus.

rected. Albertite is a mineral, he argued, and mineral rights include albertite, whether it is coal or not.

During the trial, agents of the Halifax Gas Light Company directed "numerous scandalous and libellous handbills" against Gesner. None appears to have survived. Six open letters, which he wrote to local papers in reply, were published in September 1851 under the title "Gas Monopoly: Piracy of Patents and Farmers' Rights." According to Gesner, the handbills claimed that his gas was a humbug, that it would choke the pipes, explode, suffocate the inhabitants, and destroy the sight. They dubbed him "an empiric, a very juggler, a mountebank in science and a dolt in literature." Gesner's campaign in Halifax was lost. As he pointed out, the directors were openly infringing the patent that their president had signed in his capacity of the province's attorney general.

The New Brunswick trial, the largest and most expensive one to that date in the province, opened in Fredericton on July 7, 1852. After many hours of expert testimony again addressing the question of whether or not albertite is a coal, the judge instructed the jury to find for the defendant, the Albert Mining Company. Dutifully, twelve local men, most of them farmers, decided for coal. Gesner appealed the verdict, but in the end he dropped it. Altogether, he claimed, the two trials had cost him a staggering $30,000.

In effect, having been driven out of the Maritimes, Gesner and his family moved to New York City to join Henry early in 1853. In March, a merchant of the firm Eagle & Hazard, Ship's Agents and Brokers, issued a prospectus entitled "Project for the Formation of a Company to Work the Combined Patent Rights of Dr. Abraham Gesner of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and the Right Hon. The Earl of Dundonald of Middlesex, England." The directors proposed forming a joint stock company to produce and market paving asphalt, burning fluids, tars, and greases, all of which were needed in ever-increasing quantities to power the machinery of the industrial revolution.

The North American Kerosene Gas Light Company was built in 1854 on three hectares of Long Island, Gesner designing the buildings and the equipment. In June 1854, he received three U.S. patents for "Improvements in Kerosene burning Fluids" and assigned them to the company. They described the distilling and refining process. According to an advertising poster, tests showed that kerosene oil produced a light thirteen times brighter than lard or whale oils, six times brighter than sperm oil, and four times brighter than gas light; it was cheap, clean, odourless, and safe. It is, of course, the fuel that we use today to light our cottages. As its raw material, the company imported "a certain description of cannel" (coal) from Dorchester, New Brunswick, just across Shepody Bay from the Albert mine.

Alas, a Scots engineer and entrepreneur named James Young learned that kerosene oil was much like a product that he had first developed in the United Kingdom in 1847 when he cracked a local shale and was pleased with the light produced by some of its lighter oil distillates. His British patent for obtaining what he called "paraffin" oil from bituminous coals was taken out in 1850. In 1856, he successfully sued the North American Kerosene Gas Light Company for patent infringement, forcing it to pay him royalties henceforth. Gesner never conceded that paraffin oil was as good as his kerosene.

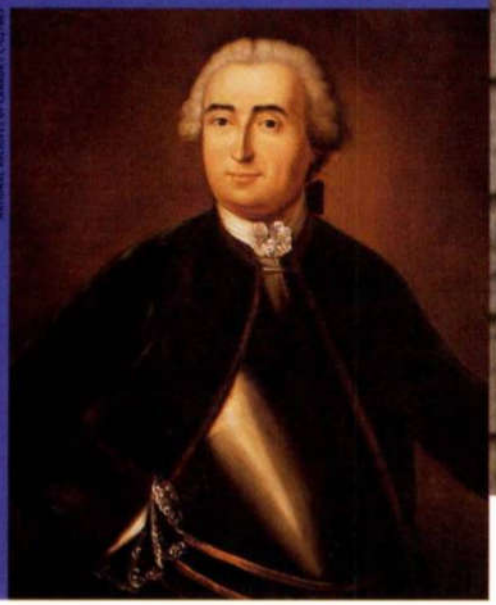
The Long Island business prospered nevertheless, as did many competing firms. Sometime before the end of 1859, Gesner lost his job as chemist. The city directories of New York show him practising medicine in Brooklyn in 1859 and 1860, a sure sign that he was desperate. Meanwhile, he worked on his oil book, *A practical treatise on coal, petroleum and other distilled oils*, published in New York in 1861. It became an industry textbook and was translated into many languages.

In January 1860, Gesner wrote to William Young, the premier of Nova Scotia, inquiring about the possibilities of finding suitable employment if he were to return to his "native land." He had sustained "some very heavy losses," he wrote, and civil war seemed inevitable. In 1861 he was back home in Nova Scotia where he received a commission to survey a gold field. But by late 1862, he was in the Saint John jail for debt. In 1864, the newly created Dalhousie College appointed him its first professor of natural history. He died a short time later, before he could take up the position, at the age of sixty-seven.

Gesner's original plant on Long Island, which became a subsidiary of the Standard Company in 1876, operated until May 1951. Hence the claim on his tombstone that this Canadian was the American inventor of kerosene oil. 🍁

Elizabeth Haigh teaches the history of science at Saint Mary's University, Halifax.

Louis-Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm, a nineteenth-century oil on canvas by an unknown artist. ■ Born into an aristocratic French family with a military background, Montcalm distinguished himself on the battlefields of Europe and enjoyed a brief retirement before being put in charge of French troops in North America when hostilities with the English resumed in 1756. Historians' assessments of Montcalm are mixed. A brave officer, he won some notable victories, but his miscalculations led to the greatest defeat in Canadian military history.



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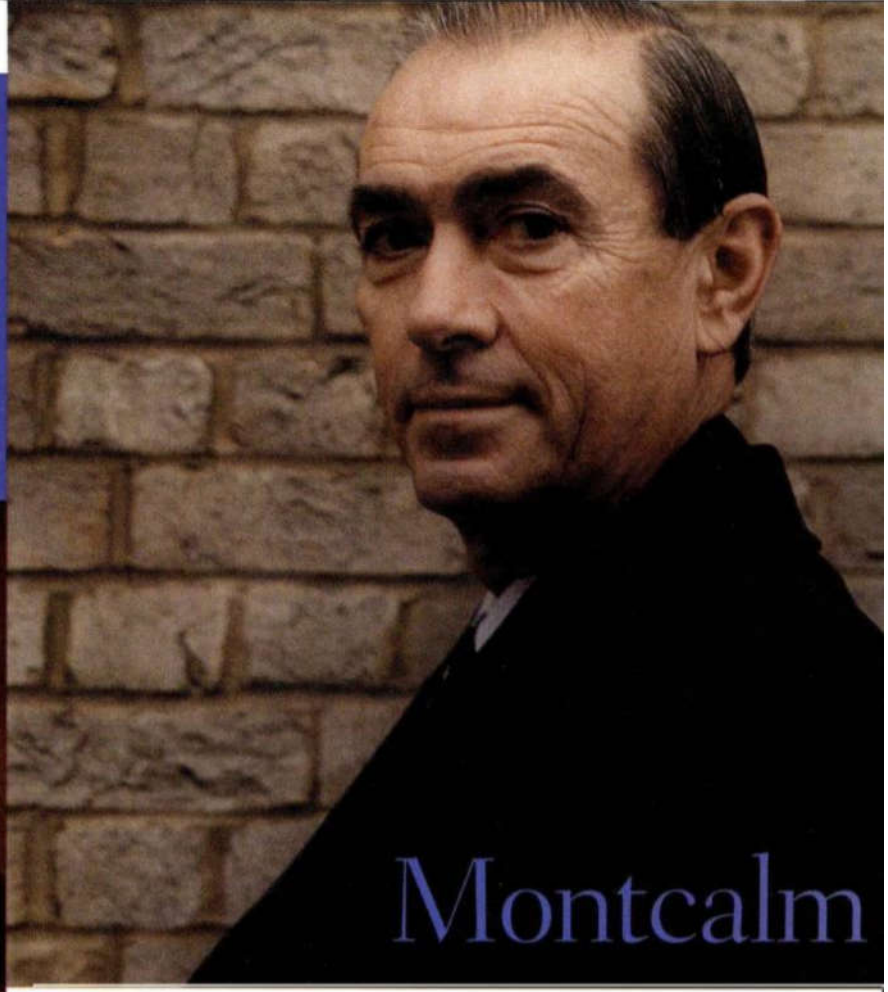


Montcalm Then . . .

by Doug

More than 240 years ago, their ancestors clashed beneath the fortified stone walls of Quebec City in a bloody battle that determined the fate of a new nation.

Neither Britain's Major-General James Wolfe nor France's Marquis de Montcalm survived the twenty-minute battle on the Plains of Abraham on the dreary September morning in 1759. The outcome, however, was decisive: British forces under Wolfe had captured Quebec, France's last stand in North America, and the victory secured England's dominance in a country now known as Canada.

Today, the descendants of Wolfe and Montcalm have buried the hatchet after meeting face-to-face, as together they explore their roots and rediscover a battle that shaped their family histories, and the history of Canada.

Andrew Wolfe Burroughs and Montcalm's descendant, Baron Georges Savarin de Marestan, met two years ago at the Montreal Film Festival, during the release of the documentary *Le Sort de l'Amerique* (*The Fate of America*).

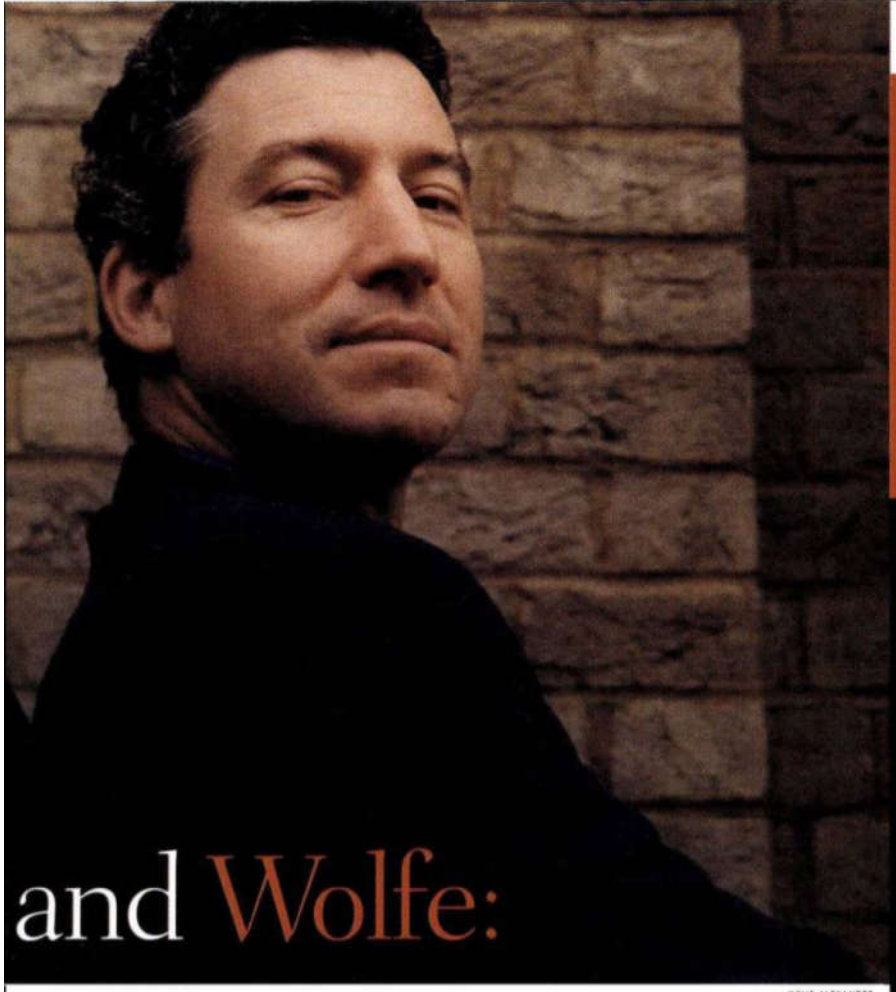
"There was a natural affinity between the two of us," the distinguished-looking de Marestan said, recalling his first impression of Wolfe Burroughs. "I responded warmly to meeting him. If not, it could have been a handshake, nothing more."

Wolfe Burroughs admits he was apprehensive meeting someone with such a title, but his misgivings soon faded into a "spontaneous relationship" that, he says, "has grown into a genuine friendship."

He has since visited de Marestan's home in Rivesaltes, France, and returned the hospitality last November with a whirlwind visit to London, England, that ended at the Wolfe Society's 222nd annual dinner in Westerham.

Neither grasped the key role their families played in

Above: Baron Georges Savarin de Marestan (left) and Andrew Wolfe Burroughs. Descendants of the protagonists at the Plains of Abraham, the Frenchman and



DOUG ALEXANDER

and Wolfe: and Now

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James Wolfe, circa 1749, oil on canvas by Joseph Highmore. ■ Not only one of the legendary figures of Canadian history, Wolfe, the commander of the British expedition that took Quebec in 1759, died a British hero. His victory over Montcalm was celebrated as the embodiment of distinct British values of the day, including the belief in English superiority. By the end of the eighteenth century, depictions of Wolfe and his death were the most familiar images in England.

Alexander

shaping Canada's history until being interviewed for the documentary by veteran Quebec filmmaker Jacques Godbout. Since then, their thirst for knowledge of their ancestry and the skirmish on the Plains of Abraham has been insatiable – fuelling a curiosity between unlikely friends.

"I was interested to find out whether Andrew had the same feelings toward General Wolfe that I had towards my ancestor," de Marestan said. "Those feelings were of admiration for somebody who had undertaken his mission to the very end on behalf of his king."

(The Baron shares a loyalty to the French monarchy with his great-uncle eight generations back: de Marestan is a member of *Le Légitimiste*, a political group that advocates restoration of the throne.)

Louis Joseph de Montcalm was born February 28, 1712, in Candiac, France, into an aristocratic family with a distinguished military background. He joined the army as an ensign at twelve, although he spent much of his childhood being educated by a private tutor who regarded him as "too opinionated and stubborn."

Montcalm's first war experience came in 1733 against the Austrians in the War of the Polish Succession. He became a noted veteran in the War of the Austrian Succession – earning a private audience with the king for his bravery, an elevated rank, and command of a cavalry regiment until war ended in 1748.

By Montcalm's own accounts, he served with distinction and was always in the thick of the fighting – he had been wounded five times during eleven campaigns over twenty-four years of service. He enjoyed seven years of semiretirement with his wife and five children in Candiac until hostilities between the French and English in North America returned him to action. He was appointed major-general in March 1756, in charge of French troops in North America.

Montcalm helped force the surrender of the British fort at Oswego in July 1756, which returned control of Lake Ontario to the French. A year later he sacked Fort William Henry, a victory marred by the slaughter of many English

the Englishman have found a mutual affinity through their interest in their ancestors' exploits.

One wonders whether friendship would have blossomed between Wolfe and Montcalm if they met on the cobbled streets of eighteenth-century Paris or London instead of a mucky field on a continent far from Europe.

prisoners by native allies of the French. In 1758, he and three thousand men repelled fifteen thousand British troops at Fort Carillon – a demoralizing British defeat that helped earn the French commander a promotion to lieutenant-general, the second highest rank in the French army.

After Carillon, Montcalm advised France that his defences were inadequate to fend off future British attacks and that either more French troops or a peace deal with England were the only options. France's response revealed its eroding position in North America at the height of the Seven Years' War. Montcalm was urged to remain on the defensive and retain a foothold in Canada. Territory surrendered could be recovered during peace negotiations.

Quebec would become that foothold.

While de Marestan admires his ancestor's loyalty, Wolfe Burroughs has a more complicated view of his distant uncle.

"I have a complex relationship with my ancestor: I don't identify with the idea that territory in Canada should be claimed by the British and people be made subjects to the British Crown – and that was an important idea my ancestor had," the amicable Londoner said. "But I see other aspects of Wolfe that I do identify with."

He sees his ancestor as a maverick, an unconventional Renaissance man ahead of his time.

"Wolfe tried to develop an appreciation of culture in Paris and admired the refinement of French manners and social customs," said Wolfe Burroughs, a self-professed lover of French history and culture.

Wolfe sought to improve himself. He studied Latin and mathematics while stationed with the military in Glasgow, Scotland, and spent six months visiting Paris in 1752.

"He was a classless man, he took care of the common soldier, he didn't expose them to any danger that he hadn't been exposed to himself. ... he believed in human rights and proper treatment of soldiers."

But Wolfe also had a volatile temper, a trait he once noted in a letter to his mother: "My temper is much too warm, and sudden resentment forces expressions and even actions that are neither justifiable or excusable."

James Wolfe was born January 2, 1727, in Westerham, England, as the eldest of two sons of respected Lieutenant-General Edward Wolfe and Henrietta Thompson. He was educated in schools in Westerham and Greenwich, where his family moved in 1738. Three years later, at age fourteen, he joined the army, but he did not see a battlefield until 1743 when he fought in Bavaria, and earned the rank of lieutenant. He rose among the military ranks in the next decade, and spent most of his time stationed in Scotland and England until the Seven Years' War erupted in 1756.

Wolfe's first foray into North America came in January 1758. The respected leader was promoted to brigadier in North America as one of three brigade commanders in Colonel Jeffrey Amherst's expedition against Louisbourg, now Cape Breton Island. Wolfe proved an unusually efficient officer during the seven-week siege that summer, and his merits caught England's attention.

It was too late in the season to attack Quebec, but Wolfe pressed for an alternative: "We might make an offensive and a destructive war in the Bay of Fundy and the Gulf of St. Lawrence," he wrote to Amherst on August 8. "I beg pardon for this freedom, but I cannot look coolly upon the bloody inroads of those hell-hounds the Canadians; and if nothing further is to be done, I must desire leave to quit the army."

Later that summer, British forces destroyed French settlements in the Saint John Valley and seized what is now Prince Edward Island. Wolfe laid waste to settlements in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

In January 1759, Wolfe was appointed major-general and commander-in-chief of the land forces for an expedition against Quebec – an elevated position he did not particularly desire.

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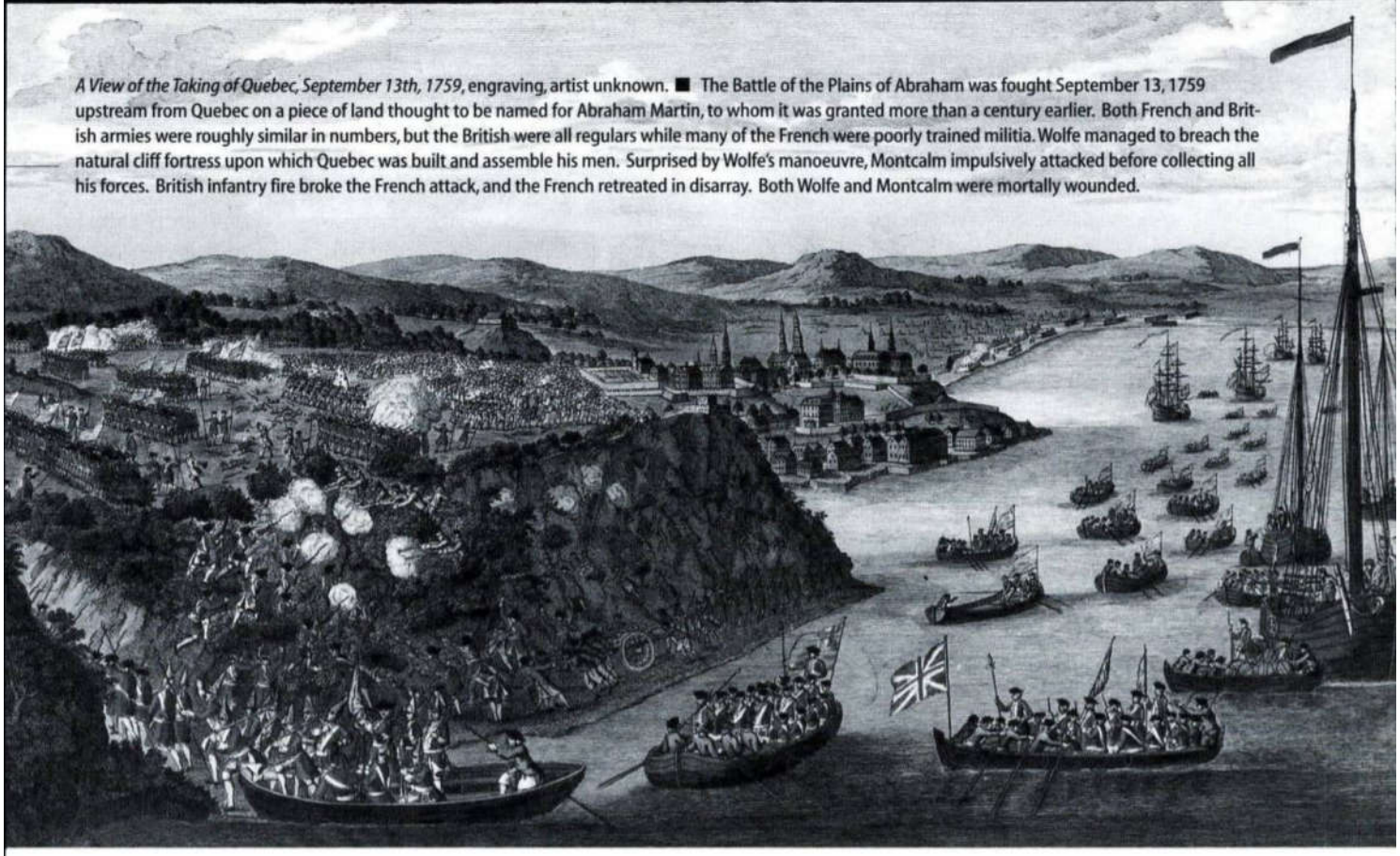
Asynchronicity exists between the two descendants of Wolfe and Montcalm. Wolfe Burroughs, forty-one, is fifteen years younger than the fifty-six-year-old de Marestan – the same age difference of their ancestral enemies. And while Wolfe and Montcalm may have been enemies on the battlefield, it wasn't personal.

"There was a feeling of honour between the two generals," de Marestan said. "They were both doing a job as best they could and they respected these qualities in each other."

This sense of respect has also transcended the generations. While watching de Marestan and Wolfe Burroughs interact, one cannot help notice a veneer of formality, a blend of respect and appreciation for what binds this friendship. One wonders whether such a friendship would have blossomed between Wolfe and Montcalm if they met on the cobbled streets of eighteenth-century Paris or London instead of a mucky field outside a French settlement on a continent far from Europe.

By late June 1759, the British forces under Wolfe's command controlled the St. Lawrence, and secured the land across the river from the walled city of Quebec. Capturing the French fortification, however, remained a formidable task. Quebec was a natural fortress, perched on a bluff wedged between the St. Lawrence and St. Charles rivers and protected by seventy-metre-high cliffs. Montcalm's position was enviable: he only needed to fend off the British until the threat of winter would drive them away.

Wolfe knew he must force Montcalm from his position by drawing him into battle, or somehow overtake the higher ground. The British spent the summer shelling Quebec and terrorizing nearby French settlements, but repeated efforts to force the French into battle failed. Wolfe finally got his break



A View of the Taking of Quebec, September 13th, 1759, engraving, artist unknown. ■ The Battle of the Plains of Abraham was fought September 13, 1759 upstream from Quebec on a piece of land thought to be named for Abraham Martin, to whom it was granted more than a century earlier. Both French and British armies were roughly similar in numbers, but the British were all regulars while many of the French were poorly trained militia. Wolfe managed to breach the natural cliff fortress upon which Quebec was built and assemble his men. Surprised by Wolfe's manoeuvre, Montcalm impulsively attacked before collecting all his forces. British infantry fire broke the French attack, and the French retreated in disarray. Both Wolfe and Montcalm were mortally wounded.

in mid-September. He discovered a small inlet five kilometres west of Quebec with an overgrown path winding up the cliff face. He kept it a secret until the eve of his attack.

Wolfe and his troops slipped upstream under cover of darkness in the early morning of September 13 and landed on the inlet's narrow beach. An advance party silently climbed the path in the drizzle and dislodged the surprised French sentries at the top. What followed was a predawn procession of redcoats clambering up the cliff and spilling onto the Plains of Abraham – the narrow plateau near the walls of Quebec. By dawn, Wolfe had assembled forty-five hundred soldiers on the plains.

Wolfe had confidence in his troops, as noted in an aging orders book preserved at the National Army Museum in Chelsea, England. The September 12 entry, scrawled in elegant handwriting that now fades into the brittle pages, says: "The officers and men will remember what their country expects from them and what a determined body of soldiers are capable of doing against five weak battalions mingled with a disorderly peasantry. The soldiers must be attentive to their officers and resolute in the execution of their duty."

Montcalm discovered the breach in the morning. He hastily assembled forty-five hundred troops – French soldiers supported by natives and an untrained Canadian militia. Montcalm could have doubled his strength if he awaited reinforcements, but instead he ordered his troops to attack. The French formation stumbled across the rough terrain, becoming disorganized as they fired ragged volleys from their muskets at extreme range from the redcoats.

The British stood their ground. As the French came within forty metres, Wolfe ordered his troops to fire. The devastating volleys that spat from the British guns tore through the French lines. The survivors scattered, the British in pursuit. Wolfe only lived long enough to see the French retreat. As he led his regiment's charge a bullet ripped into his chest, puncturing his lungs. Two soldiers ran to his aid, but he was beyond help.

One of those soldiers was likely Lieutenant Henry Browne, who said in a letter to his father: "I was the person who carried Gen. Wolf off the field and that he was wounded as he stood within a foot of me. ... The poor general after I had his wounds dressed, died in my arm's [*sic*], before he died he thanked me for my ease of him and asked me whether we had totally defeated the enemy, upon my informing him we had killed numbers, taken a number of officers and men ... he thanked God. He begged I would then let him die in peace, he expired in a minute – afterwards, without the least struggle or groan."

Montcalm didn't survive either. He was riding on horseback with the retreating French soldiers back to Quebec City when two bullets tore through his body outside St. Louis Gate. When his surgeon told him he wouldn't live, the commander reportedly grumbled: "So much the better; I shall not see the surrender of Quebec." He died the next morning and was buried in a shell hole at a local convent. The French surrendered Quebec City days later, ending French control in Canada.

Wolfe died a British hero. His body was shipped to England and buried with all the honour and pres-

tige of a great military leader. A monument to Wolfe shares Westminster Abbey with the tombs of Richard II, Queen Elizabeth I, and Mary Queen of Scots. The marble relief shows two soldiers attending the fallen Wolfe, covered only by a robe, as an angel reaches out with a hero's laurel.

The grandiose monument is in stark contrast to Wolfe's true resting place, at St. Alfege Church in Greenwich. This 280-year-old church honours the major-general with a small, but beautiful, stained-glass window depicting the leader, and a brass plaque embedded in the stone floor – a replica of the coffin plate in the vault below. A painting depicts three soldiers crowding around a limp and strangely serene Wolfe, with the battle raging in the distance. It is not unlike the famous, but historically inaccurate, painting by Benjamin West.

Wolfe is still honoured among England's great heroes. His first home in Westerham was renamed Quebec House in recognition of his last battle. A statue of the hero commands Greenwich's highest point alongside the historic Royal Observatory, majestically overlooking the palatial Royal Naval College and the Thames. In Canada House off London's Trafalgar Square, bronze statues of the victorious Wolfe and the gallant Montcalm guard the high commissioner's office. The tribute – honouring both the conqueror and the conquered – is a telling sign of Canadians' sensitivity to these generals and continued tension between English Canada and Quebec.

But such grand effigies do not speak.

The danger remains that as generations go by, eyes will pass across these monuments and glaze over, failing to recognize the names Wolfe and Montcalm. The deeds of the dead would be relegated to musty history books.

Wolfe Burroughs and de Marestan want to keep the past alive: they have endorsed a charitable trust being set up in France to foster continued interest in the Wolfe-Montcalm heritage.

"I'm glad to be taking part in activities that remind people of our history," Wolfe Burroughs said. "I think there are qualities in history we can learn from, especially when we're being surrounded by commercialism and American culture."

Friendship can be such a quality, as the distant relatives of Wolfe and Montcalm discovered.

"I think our friendship represents a connection with history – the fact that two families representing two nations which had fought so many wars down through the centuries now share a common interest from a modern, peaceful standpoint of history," Wolfe Burroughs said.

Perhaps there are also lessons to be learned from wisdom that springs from a friendship bridging generations and battle lines.

As de Marestan mused, "I feel that today there can be real unity between the peoples who were once in conflict in Quebec – and Quebec need not be something divisive." 🍁

Doug Alexander is a Canadian journalist. He lives in London, England.

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They are unique to the Rock. Once plentiful, today they are few in number. Extinction looms. But some are determined that the Newfoundland pony shall not go the way of the dodo.

Pony Tale

by Dorothy Pedersen

Under sail, a small wooden ship drifts gently away from the southwest coast of England. It is the early 1600s, and the vessel will take more than six weeks to reach Newfoundland. Rough, angry seas toss the ship around; it leaks, and is blown off course by crosswinds.

Peering into the small, dark hold, or a makeshift enclosure on deck, you can see the cargo. It looks back at you, with many brown, gentle, trusting eyes. Exmoor ponies. There are other breeds too: New Forest, Dartmoor, Galloway, Welsh, Highland, and Connemara ponies, all sailing to the New World with goats, pigs, and poultry. Ponies who are able to avoid being washed overboard will be tossed overboard if they injure themselves or become sick.

"The ponies are identified on the ship's log as 'cattell'," says Dr. Andrew Fraser, today a world-renowned authority on the ancient Celtic pony. But in the early 1600s the distinction between horses and ponies has not even yet been made. (And won't be until the early 1900s.)

Survivors of the trip are welcomed in Newfoundland. The ponies are needed to haul timber from the forests, plow land for agriculture, move rocks, transport fishing catches, and take their owners to town, the doctor, church, or to visit neighbours.

The integral role that the ponies play in the life of Newfoundlanders remains constant for three hundred years. Esau George, 77, remembers: "Lumber mills looked after their ponies well, but they worked hard ... right to the end. In the fall, the men went in the woods and cut logs, and around Christmas everyone went in with their ponies and pulled the logs out of the wood. The ponies dragged the logs along the road to the sawmill,

Interbreeding among various British ponies brought by settlers to Newfoundland in the early seventeenth century resulted in the Newfoundland pony, which is characterized by a small head with deep jowls, small hooves, a low-set tail, and a thick, dark mane, tail, and lower legs. Usually brown, other colours are not uncommon. Because of the harsh winters and scarcity of forage in Newfoundland, the pony has a thick winter coat and an ability to survive on small amounts of grass.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR / VA 1-18

Newfoundland's isolation and lack of human intervention is the perfect ground for the fertile offspring of the original ponies to produce ... the Newfoundland pony.

Hardworking and even tempered, Newfoundland ponies were a common sight in Newfoundland from the 1600s to Confederation, performing myriad tasks from hauling timber to transporting fish to taking families to church.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR / VA 14-5-4

and in the spring they'd plow the land with them. They'd pull a cart full of dried, salted fish for ten miles because there was no other transportation. Then they'd haul back the flour, sugar, molasses, and salt for the winter food." When they weren't working, the ponies were set loose to roam unfenced terrain and fend for themselves.

George's son, Clifford, goes out in the yard and lies down, and the family pony follows him, lying down beside him. The hardworking, resilient ponies, with their endearing temperaments, are trusted members of Newfoundland families.

During their "free" time over the centuries, ponies breed with each other naturally and vigorously, reaching at their height in the early-to-mid-1900s a population of fifteen thousand.

"All breeds are an invention of mankind by choosing the breeding stock and making sure all the animals look alike," says Fraser. Newfoundland's isolation and lack of human intervention is the perfect ground for the fertile offspring of the original ponies to produce, not a breed, but a breed "type," a mixture of the original breeds, which has come to be known as the Newfoundland pony.

On March 31, 1949, Newfoundland becomes Canada's newest province. Roads open. Motorized vehicles, tractors, and heavy machinery are brought into the province and take over the work of the ponies. Grazing ponies become hazards for vehicular traffic, and with little or no work to do, are now seen as a nuisance.

"They let the ponies out in the spring, and when they went to get them in the fall, and the mare had had a foal, they'd no use for the foals," says George. "So they shot them." Ponies too old to work? Shot. Sick? Shot. The resulting hecatomb, between the mid-1950s and 1970s, will forever be a black mark on Newfoundland's history.

According to Clifford George, the councils forsook the ponies and made their owners build fences so the ponies wouldn't eat people's flowers. But with the poorest economy in the country, Newfoundlanders have difficulty finding funds for fences and thousands of ponies are given to opportunists.

"I saw trucks filled with ponies," recalls Fraser. "There were loads of them, in an uncontrolled trade to Quebec where they were slaughtered for human consumption, and no one protested."

Fraser begins a movement to protect the ponies. Founded in 1979, the Newfoundland Pony Society works to establish recognition of the ponies' role in the development of Newfoundland and the social evolution of its communities. Breeding programs are established within the province, and without. But a ghastly phenomenon faces Ontario breeders – for reasons unknown, more than 80 percent of foals born are males.

In 1996, the Heritage Animals Act is passed by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Newfoundland pony is the first animal recognized.

Still, by 1998, the Newfoundland pony population has plummeted to 185, many of which are geldings or too old to reproduce. Despite efforts, and a growing appreciation by Newfoundlanders of the role the ponies played in their history, in the same year a man with a gun walks his pony down a road in Newfoundland. A member of the Newfoundland Pony Society happens by and asks, "Where are you taking the pony?" The man explains that it costs too much to feed. He's going to shoot it.

Moments later, still holding his gun, the man walks back up the road, alone. He has ten dollars in his pocket. In the opposite direction walks the volunteer, with the man's pony.

"They're a lovely pony," says one Ontario breeder. "I'd like to see people take great pride in breeding these ponies. After all, they're Canadian." ▣

Dorothy Pedersen is an award-winning agricultural writer living in Grand Valley, Ontario.

To support the preservation of the Newfoundland pony, contact the Newfoundland Pony Society at: <**http://public.gov.nf.ca/agric/her&rab/lsv010.htm**> or write Box 5022, Station C, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1C 5V3.

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Reviews

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- **Across the Top of the World: The Quest for the Northwest Passage**
  By James P. Delgado
  Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver/Toronto, 1999
  228 pp. illus., $45.00 hardcover

- **The Search for the North West Passage**
  By Ann Savours
  Chatham, Great Britain, 1999
  Distributed in Canada by McClelland & Stewart, Toronto
  342 pp. illus., $46.99 hardcover

- **Blood on the Hills: The Canadian Army in the Korean War**
  By David J. Bercuson
  University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1999
  269 pp. illus., $35.00 hardcover

- **Deadlock in Korea: Canadians at War, 1950–1953**
  By Ted Barris
  Macmillan Canada, Toronto, 1999
  334 pp. illus., $32.95 hardcover

- **Sisters in the Wilderness: The Lives of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill**
  By Charlotte Gray
  Penguin Books Canada Limited, Toronto, 1999
  379 pp., $35.00 hardcover

- **Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and The Family in Postwar Canada**
  By Mona Gleason
  University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1999
  196 pp., $19.95 paper, $50.00 hardcover

- **Rebel Life: The Life and Times of Robert Gosden, Revolutionary, Mystic, Labour Spy**
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  New Star Books, Vancouver, 1999
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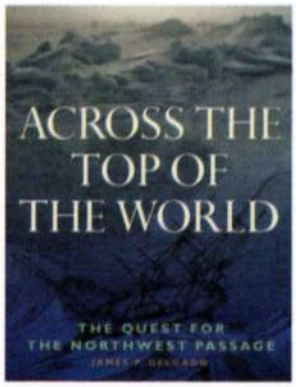
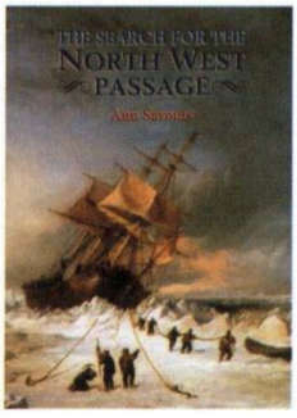
- **J.B. McLachlan: A Biography**
  By David Frank
  James Lorimer, Toronto, 1999
  592 pp. illus., $39.95 hardcover

Passage Passion

The centuries-long search for the Northwest Passage provides one of the definitive themes of Canadian history. That real-life quest, which began in the sixteenth century, also forms an integral part of British exploration history. Starting in the 1920s, the extensive literature on the subject began branching into two subtly different traditions – English and Other. Two new books reflect this bifurcation – ***Across the Top of the World*** by James P. Delgado and ***The Search for the North West Passage*** by Ann Savours. Both tell the story of the quest for a navigable sea route across North America from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. Both highlight the accomplishments of sailors (Martin Frobisher, Henry Hudson, Edward Parry) and fur-trade explorers (Samuel Hearne, Alexander Mackenzie, Dr. John Rae). As well, both books lavish attention on Sir John Franklin's final expedition, which constitutes the main complication in any history of the quest. In 1845, Franklin vanished into Arctic waters with two well-stocked ships and 128 men. His disappearance precipitated a frenzy of search activity that culminated in the mapping of the Arctic archipelago (now mostly in Nunavut) and the conquest of the passage (in 1903–06) by the Norwegian Roald Amundsen.





The two books differ, however, not just in tradition, but in approach and emphasis. With 200 illustrations, half of them in full colour, and many occupying a page, *Across the Top of the World* is probably the most spectacular one-volume record of the quest ever created. Here we find full-colour reproductions, for example, of paintings of Frobisher's men battling Inuit, of the HMS *Investigator* trapped in ice, and of Captain F.L. McClintock sledging toward King William Island. Superbly designed, the work is also so precise, so tightly written and edited, that it functions as both a coffee-table book and an authoritative reference. Author Delgado, executive director of the Vancouver Maritime Museum, is a maritime archaeologist and underwater explorer. Drawing on relics, artifacts, and personal experience, he highlights the contributions of native peoples, especially the Inuit. Delgado also served as editor of *The British Museum Encyclopedia of Underwater and Maritime Archaeology*, which probably explains the new work's encyclopedic concision. Savours's book, *The Search for the North West Passage*, is a conventionally handsome volume, well-illustrated in black and white and featuring eight pages of full-colour reproductions. To a Canadian, the work reveals its Englishness when Savours in a prelude quotes Stan Rogers and declares his classic *Northwest Passage* to be "a seafarer's tune, provenance unknown to me."

Don't get the wrong impression. This is a prodigious work of scholarship. Savours quotes some insightful observations about the Franklin search, for example, made by the brother of Captain Richard Collinson, one T.B. Collinson, in "a number of perceptive notes." Somewhere along the line, Savours not only laid hands on those notes but recognized their value. In trying to encompass this vast saga in a narrative, however, Savours ends up writing mainly for fellow experts. She's contending with too many characters over too long a period of time to sustain the narrative drive that can attract a broad general readership. We no sooner encounter an explorer than he's gone and we're onto the next – which is why Delgado's encylopedic

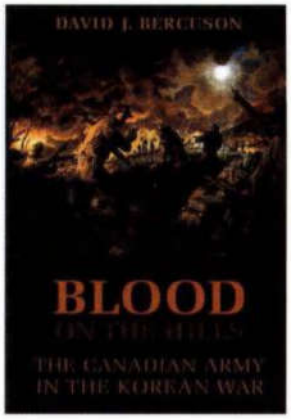
approach is, ironically, more populist: his book is designed for dipping, not continuous reading.

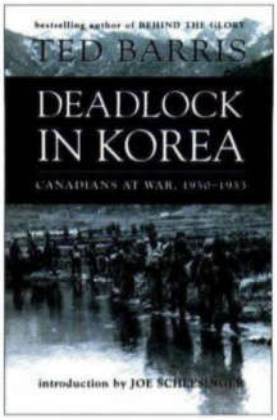
But I've mentioned Savours's Englishness. Here's her response to the scientifically motivated exhumations of Franklin sailors in 1984 and 1986 by Canadian forensic scientist Owen Beattie: "Unfortunately, these sad mortal remains have not been allowed to rest in peace." Elsewhere, Savours notes defensively that "it was (Vilhjalmur) Stefansson who began the fashion for decrying the British naval polar expeditions, forgetting that his own explorations were an extension beyond the lands and seas charted by the Royal Navy in the nineteenth century." One more example? Savours follows the traditional English line – as originated by Lady Jane Franklin – in crediting Captain F.L. McClintock with having discovered the fate of the Franklin expedition, though Dr. John Rae received the British government reward for having done so. Viewed from another perspective, McClintock was merely the first in a long line of explorers and researchers who elaborated Rae's original report. When treating key moments of history, subtleties count.

These two fine books complement each other, and to anybody who has read this far, I'd heartily recommend both. Just begin with the Delgado.

Reviewed by **Ken McGoogan**, a Calgary-based author whose sixth book, *John Rae of the Arctic*, is scheduled for publication by HarperCollins in 2001.

The Neglected War





Between October 1950 and July 1953, more than twenty-five thousand Canadians served under United Nations command as part of a "police action" to expel invading North Korean troops from South Korea. Canadians know very little about how 516 of their countrymen fought and died. David J. Bercuson's ***Blood on the Hills: The Canadian Army in the Korean War*** and Ted Barris' s ***Deadlock in Korea: Canadians at War, 1950–1953***, explore the Canadian experience of the Korean War. Different in approach and execution, both books contribute to a wider understanding of the conflict.

A noted academic and historian, Bercuson has written over thirty books on military history. *Blood on the Hills* is the first full nonofficial history of the Canadian Army's operations in the Korean War. The focus is on the army, and Bercuson aims to "determine how ready the Army was to fight in Korea and what efforts it made during the course of the war to remedy its deficiencies."

Blood on the Hills offers a new interpretation of Canada's participation in the Korean War. Bercuson contends that H.F. Wood's official history of the Korean War, *Strange Battleground*, "glossed over" the major Canadian failures, and incorrectly claimed that the army had "set things right by the summer of 1952." Bercuson maintains that statements such as these are "simply untrue." Throughout the conflict, Bercuson argues, the Canadian government refused to properly train and equip the infantry soldiers it sent to fight in the Korean hills; he concludes it was never ready. He presents the Korean conflict as a series of firsts: the first time Canada participated in a military action under United Nations auspices; the first time Canadian soldiers served under United States Corps and Army command; the first time Canadians at home took little interest in military events overseas. Canadians, Bercuson argues, have not only forgotten the Korean War; most never did pay it much attention. In November 1951, most Canadians were preoccupied with the National Hockey League race.

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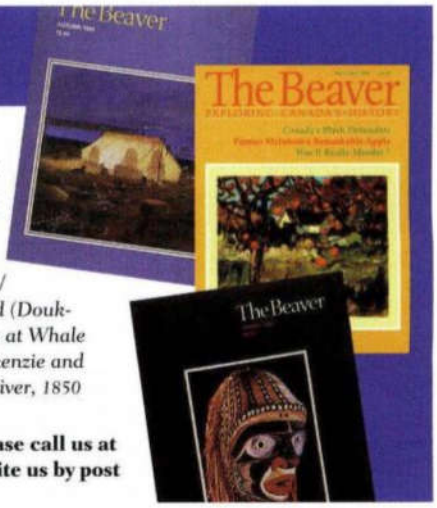

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Press, *Blood on the Hills* is a scholarly work of interest to historians, but it is also accessible to the general reader. Bercuson uses a variety of primary sources, including newspapers, Commonwealth Division war diaries, political papers, and newspapers to construct his narrative. The background and initial Canadian participation are outlined, the training methods are evaluated, and the major operations are chronicled. One chapter documents, minute by minute, a typical day for Canadian infantry soldiers.

Ted Barris's *Deadlock in Korea* presents a different portrait of the conflict. While Bercuson presents the Korean War as the first in a series of limited, modern wars, Barris maintains that the fighting in Korea was a throwback to military tactics reminiscent of Great War trench battles. Soldiers, for example, often resorted to throwing stones at Chinese patrols to force them to give away their position.

Deadlock in Korea is dedicated to preserving the memory of the Korean War, and is not concerned with the historiographical debates. An accomplished author and commentator, Barris bases his narrative on the recollections of hundreds of naval, air force, and infantry veterans who were interviewed about why they volunteered, how they were trained, where they fought, and how they remembered their experience.

The result is a lively and engaging narrative of life as it was experienced by Canadian military personnel. Using secondary sources to set the context, Barris breathes life into the story by integrating the memories of Canadian veterans. Readers can begin to imagine what life was like for these young volunteers as they struggled with the elements, their fear, and the enemy. The reader wonders at the strength and courage needed to walk through a minefield on patrol, or to survive a night in the open, under shellfire, in a rat-infested slit trench.

These two authors highlight a long-neglected aspect of Canadian history. Bercuson provides a new historiographical perspective on the debates surrounding Canada's participation in the Korean War, challenging previous orthodoxies. In contrast, Barris synthesizes the stories of hundreds of Korean veterans to produce a readable and engaging survey of the soldiers' experience of war.

Reviewed by **Ian Miller**, R.G. Byers Postdoctoral Fellow at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Sisterhood is Powerful

This double biography, ***Sisters in the Wilderness: The Lives of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill***, is a well-researched and elegantly written book. The middle-class sisters, brought up in Suffolk, England, were instructed in Greek, Latin, history, and mathematics by their father. When they arrived in Upper Canada in 1832, they were both published authors. The sisters had married former army officers and emigrated with them to the Lakefield area to take up farming. As the husbands had neither the temperament nor the ability to succeed in the backwoods of Canada, their attempts ended in failure.

The author has a penetrating pen. Every facet of these two talented women is deftly crafted. While dependent on each other, the sisters differed in personality. And it is the acid-tongued, tense, and realistic Susanna who remains embedded in one's mind. She was more of the matrix, more the risk taker. Having left the established church, she dabbled in spiritualism, worked for the abolition of slavery, and never forgot that she was an author. Days were chore-packed, but she wrote late into the night by the light of "old rags dipped in pork lard and stuffed into the mouth of a bottle." Writing was not just an emotional need but an economic requirement.

The burghers of Belleville, where Susanna lived for many years, had never seen her like before. They watched in awe as she smoked a clay pipe while weeding the garden or feeding the hens. But jealousy flared like an oil well, and schoolyard taunts that "Mrs. Moodie invents lies, and gets paid for them," troubled the Moodie children.

Susanna had a strong sense of her self-worth. Shortly after she arrived in Canada she sent examples of her verse to editors in York, Montreal, and New York. *The New York Albion* published several of her poems for which she did not get paid. She was one of the main contributors to *Literary Garland*, the first successful literary publication in North America, published by John Lovell in Montreal. He paid five pounds per page and published everything Susanna sent him. But it was her books, *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*, published in 1852 and 1853, that brought her enduring recognition.

Like her sister, Catharine Parr Traill published numerous articles and books. Her optimistic, cheerful, and deeply spiritual nature was a good balance to her husband's frequent bouts of depression. She found beauty everywhere. A flight of birds could become a poem; winter tree stumps became "turbans of snow." Her interest in botany was formed in childhood. In her most famous book, *The Backwoods of Canada: Being Letters from the Wife of an Emigrant Officer, Illustrative of the Domestic Economy of British America*, one letter is wholly devoted to the description of flowers. *Studies of Plant Life in Canada*, published in 1885 when she was 83, was widely acclaimed. "One of the greatest botanical triumphs which anyone could achieve," wrote one specialist.

The sisters lived through the gestation of nation building—the union of the Canadas, Confederation, the building of canals and railroads, and the transformation of muddy York to the Toronto of handsome buildings and well-stocked bookstores. The events and personalities of the period add interest to the book. There are charming cameos of the Chippewa (Ojibway) Indians, the generous and

intelligent Sandford Fleming, and Robert Baldwin musing about a bicultural nation.

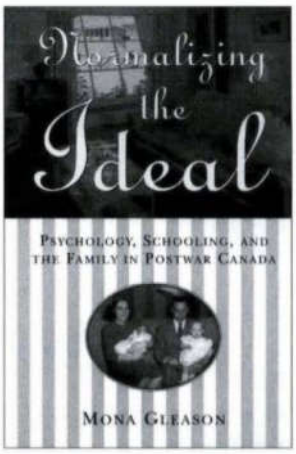
Today it is almost impossible to imagine the deprivations of pioneer life, the loneliness, and the numerous pregnancies. But it was their relentless will to write and their indomitable spirit that have assured the sisters of a prize seat in Canadian literary history. Fortunately, their most important books are still in print.

The book is a credit to Penguin Books of Canada. It is beautifully designed, with chapter endnotes, index, maps, family trees, and illustrations on logical pages. The pursuit of perfection, however, is not attainable. *Descendant*, page xii, remains one of the two most misspelled words in Canada, and while there is a cross-reference from York to Toronto in the index, the city is not listed.

Reviewed by **Shirlee Anne Smith**, former Keeper of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

When Father Knew Best

Today, when politicians of all stripes purport to speak for "the family," and when the term "family values" carries an ominously right-wing tinge to it, Mona Gleason's history of psychology's construction of the "normal" family is very timely. ***Normalizing the Ideal*** traces the ascendancy of psychological expertise in postwar Canada. Via the pages of popular periodicals, newspapers, and radio, Dr. William Blatz and Dr. Samuel Laycock (and their less well-known colleagues) transformed the so-called "ideal family" – the Anglo, middle-class, heterosexual, male breadwinner model – into the Canadian norm. Dr. Blatz (the Director of the Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto) and Dr. Laycock (the Head of Educational Psychology at the University of Saskatchewan) were popularizers of children's psychological development. Allied with the support of school boards, they "normalized the ideal family" in their quest to establish psychology's paramount expertise in matters of family life and child development. In this regard, psychologists were no different than many other experts in the post–World War II era, who played upon the insecurities exacerbated by Cold War fears and earlier wartime changes in gender roles, to



fret about Canadian society and hence carve out a professional sinecure for themselves. Gleason's social history of psychological discourse is part of a growing body of revisionist literature in both American and Canadian history that successfully explores the reality of life in postwar society. Her findings reinforce those made by other social and gender historians that both the much vaunted postwar "normalcy" as well as the "idealized family" was constructed to serve a host of social, economic, and, in particular, professional ends. However, *Normalizing the Ideal* provides the first social history of psychological discourse and its key players that makes an important contribution to our knowledge of the era.

Beginning with an analysis of psychology's shift away from an eugenicist focus (largely because of the association with Nazi atrocities) to the new practical, socialization models, Gleason quickly establishes the ways in which the profession made pragmatic choices to opt for practical utility over theoretical obscurity. Exploiting the fears raised by the changing Canadian demographic, and the challenges of class, racial, and gender differences, psychologists were quick to re-create a "traditional" social order in the face of rapid changes. Gleason's book is at its best in demonstrating how the appropriate gendered roles of mothers and fathers were key to "normal" child development. The largest burden of blame for abnormal child development was laid at the feet of working-class and immigrant mothers who could not, or would not, emulate the middle-class ideal. Generally speaking, few mothers were spared when it came to possible reasons for the psychological, social, or sexual maladjustment of their children. Equally suspect were female teachers who, largely because of their gender, their temperament, and their perceived lack of training, the male psychologists found nearly as problematic as mothers. Fathers were not ignored by this psychological dis-

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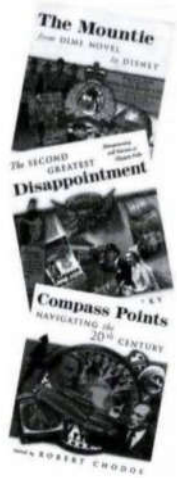

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course, but they were always regarded as more stable than women, and their primary role was to learn how to shift to a new democratic ideal of paternalism. In the end, Gleason demonstrates that the success of psychology's play for the minds of Canadians was due to the combination of two factors: the popularization of psychological studies in the media, and psychology's increasing prominence in the educational system. These factors combined to legitimize psychological discourse with politicians, social workers, educators, and the general populace.

Mona Gleason's brief book offers a fascinating, yet damning, portrait of supreme professional arrogance, probably best epitomized by Dr. Laycock's quip to critics about male professionals' ability to deal with so-called "women's issues." Laycock stated: "You don't have to be a hen to know if an egg is bad or not." Today, when influential media celebrities like Dr. Laura Schlesinger are powerful arbitrators of "social relations," it is difficult to remember a time when psychological advice did not permeate the media. One wishes that Gleason had not been so circumspect in regard to the contemporary state of affairs, when the power of psychology and the allure of the "ideal family" still continues to have significant social, economic, and political ramifications.

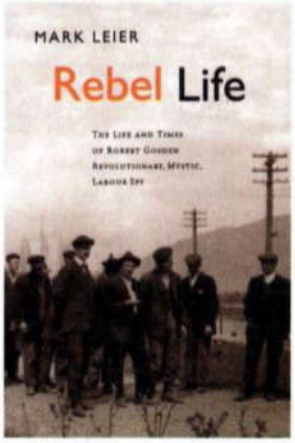
Reviewed by **Valerie Korinek**, who teaches Canadian cultural and gender history at the University of Saskatchewan. Her book, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine in the Fifties and Sixties*, is scheduled for publication in November.

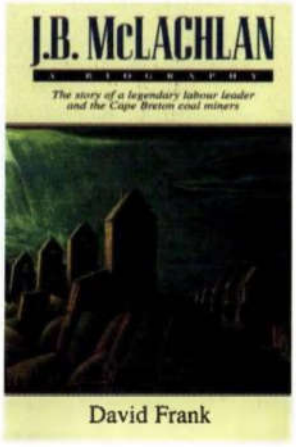
Working-Class Heroes

A former colleague of mine, although he didn't go as far as prizewinning author Alberto Manguel who dismisses biography as "gossip," was emphatic that biography is not history. This view has been very widely ignored by his fellow Canadian historians whose writing in the twentieth century has been noteworthy for its attention to biography, a concentration perhaps best exemplified by the multivolume *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.

Rebel Life: The Life and Times of Robert Gosden, Revolutionary, Mystic, Labour Spy, and ***J.B. McLachlan: A Biography*** are part of this genre, but from a different and less well-represented area of discipline – labour history. These two volumes illustrate both the limitations and possibilities of writing the lives of labour figures.

Rebel Life is what it promises – a life and times – though only fragmentary records of the life of Robert Gosden have been recoverable. (The author includes a section on the difficulties of his research.) This rather bald story he supplements with vignettes from the labour history of British Columbia, which author and publisher have chosen to present as sidebars to the main text. This format is confusing to the reader who must move back and forth to get much of the context of the basic narrative. Also included is a bibliography of the labour history of British Columbia, which assembles both published books and articles as well as the rich, unpublished literature of theses and dissertations.





David Frank

David Frank's 600-page volume on Cape Breton Communist miners' leader James Bryson McLachlan is on the massive scale usually reserved for major political figures or outstanding professional people. The author characterizes it as a "social biography" but it is mostly a conventional presentation with incredible detail – obviously a labour of love whose re-

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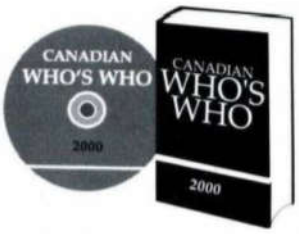

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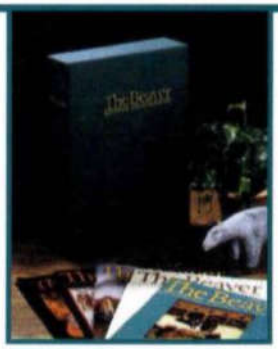

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search extended over twenty-five years.

This biography is anything but a "life and times"– McLachlan is present on every page. Amidst the welter of specifics–youth in Scotland, emigration to Cape Breton, struggles as a coal miner, battles within the unions, confrontations with management, trial and imprisonment, electoral contests–it is, however, hard to find the wellsprings of McLachlan's conduct.

J.S. Woodsworth provides the most striking short characterization of McLachlan as a "labour covenanter." Frank records it along with other less pithy portraits, but doesn't expand on it. Yet it makes a vital connection between McLachlan's upbringing and his adult life of struggle. Frank sets forth in his usual thorough way the facts of McLachlan's youthful connection with the Cameronians. This Scottish sect descended directly from the seventeenth-century democratic religious radicals who were persecuted as the "Covenanters" for their fierce opposition to the intervention of the state in their religious community.

Woodsworth's "labour covenanter" fought the same battle for democratic rights, but in the age of capitalism. He pitted himself against autocracy, whether in government, the steel and coal corporations, or the international unions, always in the name of local community control by the people themselves. Even the Communist part itself could be, and was, upbraided for not consulting McLachlan's constituency.

Frank's failure to make this obvious comparison a theme of his work perhaps reflects the difficulty of the current generation of secular labour historians in dealing with the religious views of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century radicals. Although the culture of those times was strongly influenced by religiously based ethics and morals, a recent survey of Canadian working-class experience has, for instance, no mention of this underlying stratum. None of these comments, however, detract from what is a monumental study of a fascinating leader of the Canadian working class.

Reviewed by **Keith Ralston**, an emeritus member of the history department at the University of British Columbia.

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The **Beaver**

CANADA'S OTHER GAME

Broken bones and bleeding scalps. No, it's not hockey. It's lacrosse–Canada's official national sport. Before Europeans pacified it, baggataway among North America's native people was more akin to war than to pastime.

BY BRYAN EDDINGTON

Aftermath *When the Great War ended, the returning soldier, neglected by a miserly government, was left with his uniform, a tin hat, and a few dollars. But later, Mackenzie King recognized the danger of twice spurning those who sacrificed so much.* BY JONATHAN VANCE

Cause Célèbre *In the 1870s, conflict between liberals and the Catholic Church converged on Joseph Guibord's dead body.* BY ROBERT STEWART

CHRIS RAIBLE

Booknotes

"The war that both sides won," historian Wesley B. Turner calls the War of 1812. His brief, popular, and reliable work by that title has just been revised and republished. Some American scholars have called the war "the second American Revolution." The Americans fought to defend their sovereignty against Britain. The Canadians (that is, primarily the British troops in Canada) fought to defend their sovereignty against the U.S. The treaty that ended the war returned everything to the *status quo ante bellum*, an unsatisfactory conclusion from a military perspective, but essentially a happy one for both Canadians and Americans. The real losers were the Indians who allied themselves with the British in the hope of retaining their territories in the West. For them, key battles were lost and solemn promises were broken.

The tragedy of this ultimate Indian loss, despite the heroic leadership of Tecumseh, is one of the themes of Victor Suthren's *The War of 1812*, a book version of last year's epic television series. (It comes complete with a CD-ROM–I found it awkward to use, but perhaps I'm too print oriented). It is a book lovely to look at and easy to read. It makes fine use of contemporary quotes, especially from the diaries of General Prevost's daughter (there is, alas, no indication of the location of the original manuscript). It is lavishly illustrated with archival and modern images (a few are incorrect–shown is the *first* Brock monument and Fenians did not blow it up; a map should read *Crysler's* not *Chrysler's* Farm). A more serious fault is Suthren's bare mention, without the dramatic descriptions they deserve, of the various sea battles the Americans decisively won–this omission by an author who is a naval expert is especially surprising. And he completely passes over the Battle of New Orleans, which the British decisively lost–it may have been fought after the war was officially over; nonetheless it was a significant

military achievement. The many battles Suthren does cover, he describes very well, although, for no apparent reason, some are treated more fully than others. Nevertheless, this is a book to be treasured.

Unaccountably, Suthren's bibliography does not include a volume that, in balance and content, is a more satisfying account of the war, even though it also is very Canadian in perspective. *The Incredible War of 1812* is essentially a military history, and it was originally written thirty-five years ago by Ottawa archivist J. Mackay Hitsman. Long a standard work, but also long out of print, it has now been republished, updated, fully footnoted, extensively illustrated – an edition that is the splendid effort of Donald E. Graves. If you only ever read one history of that inconclusive war, read this one. Its research is impeccable, its scope comprehensive, its judgments balanced, its language clear. Graves himself has written a whole series of works on the war, the latest being *Field of Glory: The Battle of Crysler's Farm, 1813*, describing a decisive American defeat and British-Canadian victory. Graves has a marvellous ability to marshal many facts without interrupting the flow of his narrative. For history buffs, everything he writes is well worth reading. His publisher has, by the way, rereleased Graves's editing of one War of 1812 British officer's personal experiences, a volume entitled *Merry Hearts Make Light Days*.

Retired Brock University professor Wesley B. Turner drew on his years of teaching and research to produce a focused, scholarly work: *British Generals in the War of 1812: High Command in the Canadas*. Whatever the role of the Canadian civilian militia, it was the British military who won/lost the war. The Canadian career of Isaac Brock, one of our few heroes, is here more critically examined than we have been used to, and a welcome reappraisal it is. His stature is not diminished, but aspects of his impatient and impetuous personality are questioned. The service of four other generals – Sir George Prevost, Roger Shaeffe, Baron Francis de Rottenburg and Gordon Drummond – is also discussed in detail, their skills and faults, their fortunes and failures. In the process, Prevost emerges as a much more capable commander than he is usually described. The book thus provides a fresh perspective for evaluating the war, even though, as Turner concludes, in the decision to end the fighting, "it was European events and politics that counted far more than successes or failures of British, Canadian, and Native forces in North America." Now what we need is an equally fair and judicious appraisal of the American leadership, written from an American perspective.

The War of 1812 was perhaps not so much won as not lost. Notwithstanding the genuine worth of all of these books, whenever I read accounts of military campaigns and battles, I feel the need of a larger context. What are the social consequences of all that is being related? This is why I so much appreciated George Sheppard's *Plunder, Profit and Paroles* (published in 1994: I only discovered it last year). Its account of the effects of the war, during and after, on the whole population of Upper Canada, should give pause to anyone with an interest in this period of our history. When so many myths and half-truths abound, Sheppard's fresh perspective was to me *very* welcome.

The War of 1812 is also the setting for one chapter in *A Stolen Life*, the biography of Richard Pierpoint, an African captured as a slave in 1860, owned by Loyalists in New York, and freed for fighting with Butler's Rangers. Pierpoint became a resident of Niagara, a militia member (aged over seventy) of the Coloured Corps, and eventually a landowner in Garafraxa. Indeed, apart from these few facts, very little is known about him. The authors have done impressive research in order to fill in the gaps with reliable, if not verifiable, details. The book is a useful recounting of neglected aspects of our colonial (American and Canadian) history.

Books Cited

- *The War of 1812: The War That Both Sides Won* (second edition)
  By Wesley B. Turner. Dundurn, 2000. 159 pp., $16.99 paper.
- *The War of 1812*
  By Victor Suthren. McClelland & Stewart, 1999. 288 pp., $60.00 hardcover with CD-ROM.
- *The Incredible War of 1812: A Military History*
  By J. Mackay Hitsman, updated by Donald E. Graves. Robin Brass Studio, 1999. 432 pp., $22.95 paper.
- *Field of Glory: The Battle of Crysler's Farm, 1813*
  By Donald E. Graves. Robin Brass Studio, 1999. 426 pp., $44.95 hardcover; $22.95 paper.
- *British Generals in the War of 1812: High Command in the Canadas*
  By Wesley B. Turner. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999. 260 pp., $39.95 hardcover.
- *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*
  Edited by Donald E. Graves. Robin Brass Studio, 1999 (originally published 1993). 308 pp., $19.95 paper.
- *Plunder, Profit and Paroles: A Social History of the War of 1812 in Upper Canada*
  By George Sheppard. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994. 368 pp., $49.95 hardcover.
- *A Stolen Life: Searching for Richard Pierpoint*
  By David Meyler and Peter Meyler. Natural Heritage Books, 1999. 141 pp., $19.95 paper.

More Books Worth Noting

- *Circles of Time: Aboriginal Land Rights and Resistance in Ontario*
  By David T. McNab. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1999. $54.95 hardcover; $29.95 paper.
  The Oka uprising of 1990 (and the negotiations following) are put in historical context in a work which defends the reliability of aboriginal oral tradition.
- *Feminist Politics on the Farm: Rural Catholic Women in Southern Quebec and Southwestern France*
  By Naomi Black and Gail Cuthbert Brandt. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999. $65.00 hardcover.
  Issues of "control and autonomy" in the lives of some 400 rural women in two countries are the subject of scholarly scrutiny.

continues

- *Five Pennies: A Prairie Boy's Story*
  By Irene Morck. Fifth House, 1999. $14.95 paper.
  A daughter uses her father's own words to tell tales of his daily life growing up on the prairie.
- *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools*
  By R. D. Gidney. University of Toronto Press, 1999. $65.00 hardcover; $24.95 paper.
  A modern – that is, second half of the twentieth century – tracing of change, turmoil, and conflict within the Ontario school system.
- *From the Inside Out: The Rural World of Mennonite Diarists, 1863 to 1929*
  Edited by Royden Loewen. University of Manitoba Press, 1999. $45.00 hardcover; $24.95 paper.
  The diaries of twenty-one Mennonites who came to Canada – Swiss-Americans to Upper Canada at the beginning of the 19th century and Dutch-Russians to Manitoba near the end – reveal something of how a people maintained order in their lives.
- *Her Story III: Women from Canada's Past*
  By Susan E. Merritt. Vanwell Publishing, 1999. $15.95 paper.
  Another volume in a series presenting short biographies of influential, even heroic, Canadian women.
- *Iron & Steam: A History of the Locomotive and Railway Car Builders of Toronto*
  By Dana William Ashdown. Robin Brass Studio, 1999. $22.95 paper.
  Not the oft-repeated saga of building Canada's railways, but the ('til now) untold tale of the building of railway engines and rolling stock – a book adeptly authored, extensively illustrated, and artfully designed.
- *Leaside*
  Edited by Jane Pitfield. Natural Heritage Books, 1999. $24.95 paper.
  The memories and skills of more than a hundred people combined to create this tribute to a community now absorbed into metropolitan Toronto.
- *Lions Gate*
  By Lilia D'Acres and Donald Luxton. Talon Books, 1999. $29.95 hardcover.
  The building of Lions Gate, the bridge destined to become Vancouver's icon, is described as "an uncompromising act of iron will – the clash of titans."
- *Looking West: Photographing the Canadian Prairies, 1858–1957*
  By Brock V. Silversides. Fifth House, 1999. $24.95 paper.
  This album of stunning archival photographs allows one to see – and almost smell, touch, taste, and hear – a land, its people, and its history.
- *More Canada Firsts*
  By Duff Conacher. McClelland & Stewart, 1999. $19.99 paper.
  A second book of props for our shaky national pride – no sources, no index, but clear and interesting entries.
- *Nice Work: The Continuing Scandal of Canada's Senate*
  By Claire Hoy. McClelland & Stewart, 1999. $32.50 hardcover.
  Controversial columnist Hoy skims the surface of the Senate's turbulent history and then plunges into more recent discord to argue for "renewal" rather than abolition.
- *Poor Ignorant Children: Irish Famine Orphans in Saint John, New Brunswick*
  By Peter D. Murphy, D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies, Saint Mary's University, 1999. $20.00 paper.
  As "those Irish" flooded into Saint John in the late 1840s, hundreds of orphans had to be cared for. This volume sketches the story of one asylum and reprints the detailed entries in one of its original ledgers.
- *A Rich and Fruitful Land: The History of the Valleys of the Okanagan, Similkameen, and Shuswap*
  Edited by Jean Webber. Harbour Publishing, 1999. $36.95 hardcover.
  A clear, coherent history, created by compiling extracts from "articles, essays, letters, diaries, memoirs and observations" originally published over a seventy-year span.
- *Setting the Stage: Montreal Theatre 1920–1949*
  By Herbert Whittaker. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999. $39.95 hardcover.
  The man who was (before retirement) Canada's foremost theatre critic recalls and reflects on his early days in Montreal's theatre world.
- *The Silent Song: A Daughter's Tribute to a Reluctant Pioneer*
  By Marjorie Wilkins Campbell. Fifth House, 1999. $12.95 paper.
  A reprint of an award-winning author's sad but sweet tribute to her genteel English mother's ordeals while roughing it on the prairie.
- *The Two Atlantics: The Shipwreck of the SS Atlantic at Prospect, NS, April 1, 1873*
  By Keith A. Hatchard. Nimbus Publishing, 1999. $12.95 paper.
  A reprint of an award-winning account of a maritime disaster.

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A Credit to the Council

Distribution of the special "Our Century" edition of the *Beaver* (February/March 2000) to some twenty thousand libraries and history teachers across the country was carried out with the assistance of the Manitoba Arts Council.

In March, the council approved the Society's application for a grant "to a maximum of $5000" in support of this expanded distribution plan for the issue. In commenting on the Society's application, the council noted: "This is a strong application in terms of the cultural significance of the magazine … [and] it makes a strong case for its commitment to high quality writing and an ability to attract manuscripts of national importance."

Established in 1965, the Manitoba Arts Council is an arms-length agency of the provincial government that aims to "promote the study, enjoyment, production and performance of works in the arts." The Society gratefully acknowledges the council's support of the "Our Century" issue and appreciates its kind comments on the magazine.

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Bravo!

Canada's National History Society ended the twentieth century and completed its fifth anniversary year on a solid and progressive note.

At the Society's annual meeting held in June in Winnipeg, it was announced that in 1999, for the first time in the history of the *Beaver*, subscription revenues for the magazine surpassed the million-dollar mark. Based on the December 1999/January 2000 issue, 44,201 people were subscribers to the magazine, an all-time high. Contributing factors to these impressive results include an improved magazine with a higher profile thanks to increased marketing, a heightened interest in history spawned by the millennium, and a loyal and generous audience. *Beaver* readers not only renew their subscriptions in above-average numbers, many of them give the magazine as gifts and support the work of the Society through personal contributions (which in 1999 – the Society's first formal year of fundraising – approached $100,000). The Society thanks its readers for the key role they played in last year's results.

It was also noted at the annual meeting that after three years of labour-intensive preparatory work, *An Index to The Beaver Magazine*, with over thirty thousand entries covering seventy-five years, was launched in print and CD-ROM versions and added to the Society's website <www.historysociety.ca>. This is a superb research tool, offering a wealth of information on Canada's social, cultural, economic, and commercial past. Entries are listed by subject and author and cross-referenced, and in its electronic versions is searchable by key word.

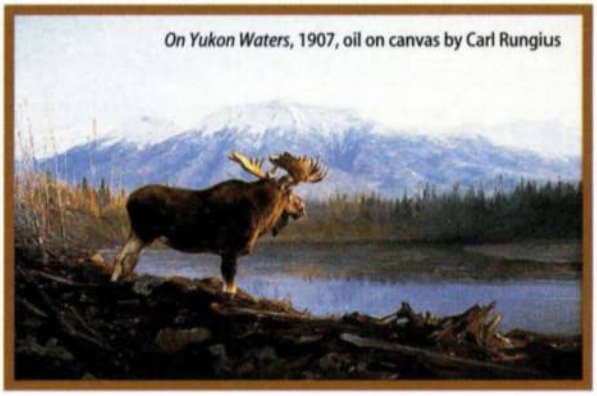
Coming to an airport near you!

By the end of the year, you will be able to buy the *Beaver* at approximately fifty newsstands in eight major Canadian airports in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver. The program took off modestly with the April/May 2000 issue and is expected to reach cruising altitude by late fall.

Museum Profile

The Glenbow Museum is a tribute to the remarkable vision of its founder, Eric Harvie, a Calgary oilman who in the 1950s started building an extraordinary collection of objects, art, documents, and photographs. Today, Glenbow visitors can explore the rich cultures of the First Nations, trace the settlement of the Canadian West, research their family history in Glenbow's extensive library and archives, and learn about other cultures from around the world.

The second-floor galleries feature innovative exhibition themes that combine art and artifacts from Glenbow's own collections of nearly two million objects with the best travelling exhibitions from other international museums and galleries. This summer and fall (through November 5), Glenbow highlights part of Harvie's amazing collection with BRUSH WITH THE WILD, a celebration of wildlife art that includes a major exhibition on Carl Rungius, one of the most influential wildlife artists in North America. Glenbow's Rungius collection is world-renowned, and many Rungius masterpieces are included in this exhibition exploring his life and work. Four adjunct exhibitions explore wilderness, wildlife, and contemporary wildlife art, and Glenbow's popular DISCOVERY ROOM is brimming with "wild" hands-on activities for all ages. A wide range of lively programs for families, kids, and adults explores the theme of wilderness.


On Yukon Waters, 1907, oil on canvas by Carl Rungius

In fall 2001, Glenbow will proudly open a new gallery devoted to the history and culture of the Blackfoot people. This unique exhibition, being developed in partnership with the Blackfoot Confederacy, will present the Blackfoot story from their own perspective.

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- Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, Winnipeg
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- McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal
- Pointe à Callière, Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal
- Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, QC
- New Brunswick Museum, Saint John
- Yarmouth County Museum, Yarmouth, NS

A discount of at least 10 percent on regular admission will be given upon presentation of your membership card. Some restrictions may apply. All subscribers to the *Beaver* are automatically members of the Society.

The Business of History

In Fred Hosking's office at the fast-growing company he runs in Ottawa's Centretown, two framed degrees from the University of Waterloo and a board of trade citation are almost the only decoration. Is this bony, intense young man with the cropped hair another one of Waterloo's computer-science grads, a techno-prodigy turned dot-com entrepreneur through some Internet start-up?

"The challenge," Hosking says, "is human resources. . . . In our field, really, the opportunities are limitless."

DENIS DREYER PHOTOGRAPHY

Fred Hosking (right rear), his partner Gerard Hartley (beside him), and some of the young historians of Public History Inc. take a photo break in the firm's library in Ottawa. Founded by four history graduates in 1995, the Ottawa- and Winnipeg-based historical-research firm now employs over thirty people.

Actually, no. Fred Hosking is a historian.

Still, the comparison is not so far-fetched. Public History Inc., the firm Hosking and three other young history grads started just five years ago, is technology driven. It serves a blue-chip client list from offices in Ottawa and Winnipeg. It keeps thirty young, research-oriented staffers busy. The core business is archival research instead of chips or code, but Hosking suggests the growth potential is just as large as in the latest dot-com sensation.

"The challenge," Hosking says, "is human resources. If we could find another hundred good people and I could devote six months to marketing our services, we could keep all hundred people busy permanently. In our field, really, the opportunities are limitless."

What's this – business opportunities for history students? Well, yes. Land-claim research, government policy reviews, and legal battles over historical issues generate substantial amounts of work for historical researchers around Canada's major archives. Today, PHI's client list includes Indian Affairs and other government departments, First Nations bands from across the country, corporate clients such as TransCanada Pipelines, and several prominent law firms. All have needed research support on issues involving historical and archival evidence. All have been willing to entrust substantial contracts to this group of twentysomethings with a business plan.

Land-claims researchers, heritage consultants, and archival-research partnerships have existed for years, particularly in Ottawa. If Public History Inc. is different, it is mostly in the consciously growth-oriented, business mindset of its founders. "Frankly, we did not want to be like historians traditionally have been," says Hosking. "We aimed at business professionalism. We wanted to be able to deliver the product that clients needed, in the form they needed, and to be professional about it – not just to be a few people who would disappear when one of them went to law school, or who could not handle large amounts of data or up-to-date software or sophisticated billing systems."

They also see themselves as quite different from the average academic consultant. "We say to firms, we can do your historical research needs in the professional, businesslike manner you expect, not on academic conditions and attitudes and time frames," says Hosking. Eric Angel, one of the founding partners, who now runs the Winnipeg office of PHI, puts it succinctly: "It's a sideline for them. It's a business for us."

From the start, Public History Inc. was capital intensive, technology driven, and above all relentlessly businesslike. "We paid attention to every aspect of the business, putting as

much care into administration and human resources, for instance, as into our research contracts," recalls Angel.

The firm will do historical analysis or provide policy advice if asked, but more frequently its assignment is documentation and data management. PHI's researchers locate records, assemble them into customized databases, organize and summarize them, cross-index them, and deliver them on time and in usable formats. Leading-edge information sciences are crucial to productivity in this field, and PHI has invested heavily in computers, database software, and GIS mapping technology.

This business approach to history had its origins in a university history program. At the University of Waterloo, Hosking attended one of the few public history graduate programs in Canada, one based on the radical idea that historians might actually work outside the university, the way other professionals do, and that the university should equip them with appropriate skills. Much of what public history programs emphasize, in fact, is what you might assume any self-respecting history department would give to all its graduates: experience in things like archival research, techniques of data management, and respect for the historical needs for different audiences and clients.

But Professor Heather MacDougall, director of Waterloo's public history program (and an advisor to PHI) hopes her program also encourages personality traits not always associated with historians: drive, independence, entrepreneurial spirit. "Fred had it," she recalls. "I think he was already thinking of launching a business along these lines." In the co-op work terms that are a hallmark of Waterloo programs, Hosking worked on land-claims matters for both First Nations bands and government departments, and he met the partners with whom he launched PHI.

Public History Inc. has hired several more public history graduates and others with conventional historical credentials. But the firm's principals are hardly uncritical admirers of university education. Indeed, as employers, they regularly face the problem of the illiterate university graduate.

"We have had people come to us with remarkable credentials, highly recommended by prominent academics – and they can't write a summary of a document to save their lives," says Angel. "It does make you wonder."

PHI has responded in its usual pragmatic way – it assesses all its job applicants through its own battery of tests. Angel is convinced historical knowledge is vital, even to the data-management aspects of PHI's business. But, in general, the firm finds university credentials in history a poor predictor of competence in what ought to be fundamental intellectual skills. "The degrees applicants have are absolutely irrelevant to us," says Hosking bluntly. "They are not useful indicators of ability."

Some PHI staff return to academic programs, but the core staff like it where they are. Katherine O'Connor, an employee who has run several big research projects for the firm, enjoys being consulted as the expert in her field. Angel says he has done far more research than he would ever have done in university – and enjoyed greater opportunity to "push the boundaries of how we do history by applying advances in technology." Angel has always seen public history as a career choice. He continues to be puzzled by the conservatism of many history students about doing history outside the university.

These days Fred Hosking thinks about business more than about research: he's finding new clients and good staff, positioning his firm, seeking capital for expansion. "In the United States, there is a lot of specialization already. You have litigation public history firms, cultural-policy public history firms, land-claims public history firms." He expects competition to emerge here. But for now, he believes, PHI is the market leader.

Hosking and his partners intend for PHI to continue growing. Indeed, Hosking admits with a grin to one ambition he expects to achieve soon: to enjoy a year in which Public History Inc. hires more historians to full-time positions than all the universities in Canada combined.

Public History Inc.'s website is <www.publichistory.ca>.

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Album

Barbara Washbern, who submitted this photograph to the *Beaver*, lives in Maple Ridge, B.C. She stands fifth from left, next to her father Wilfred Rutledge, who was a World War I pilot and an aviation instructor in Calgary in later civilian life. Her mother Audrey, an English war bride, adjusts her costume, second from left. Her younger sister Beth Calangis, the littlest figure in the photo, and the only other surviving member of this cheerful summer outing, lives in Vancouver.

A Day at the Beach The girls – from left to right, Audrey Rutledge, Lena Pratt, Muriel Pratt, Barbara Rutledge, and Beth Rutledge – are almost as bare as you dare – at least by 1922 standards, and perhaps even by the standards of Cranbrook, B.C. (not known to be a fashion cynosure). A few years before this record of a cousins' day at the beach was snapped, they might well have been swaddled for their swimming pleasure in black, puffy-sleeved wool dresses with bloomers and black stockings – figures of Victorian modesty and propriety and, one might expect, miserable discomfort. But if twentieth-century swimwear is a progress toward the kind of dental-floss monokini of Rio's Ipanema beach, then these one-piece suits with thigh-length, tight-fitting shorts, deep oval necklines, and thin shoulder straps are a stop along the way. Though they reflected, as did the short skirts and bobbed hair of the day, women's sense of newfound freedom in the wake of World War I, you can likely bet somewhere behind this picture's photographer is some old duffer harrumphing about the indecent exposure of female flesh.

And what of the boys – left to right, Howard Pratt, Wilfred Rutledge, and Wallace Rutledge? Male beach attire doesn't much capture the attention of social anthropologists, but the trend to shrinkage paralleled that of women. Tops through the late '20s and early '30s became tighter, tucked-in, and more abbreviated until finally, in 1937, the battle to liberate the male chest was won and the two-piece swimsuit was banished forever. And that's just about that for innovation in men's beachwear. For women, however, there's more to come – especially when someone names a bathing costume after a remote South Pacific reef. ◘

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in our country's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied at your local photo shop (please don't send priceless originals) and send it to: Album, c/o *The Beaver*, #478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your copy returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 3, 2000

EASTERN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7:00 AM	TURNING POINTS OF HISTORY					CROWN AND COUNTRY	GREAT TRAIN STORIES
7:30 AM						CROWN AND COUNTRY	
8:00 AM	THE CAMPBELLS					SENSE OF HISTORY	SENSE OF HISTORY
8:30 AM	A SCATTERING OF SEEDS					ORIGINS	ORIGINS
9:00 AM	SKETCHES OF OUR TOWN					CANADIAN HISTORY	THE 20TH CENTURY
9:30 AM	IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY						
10:00 AM	SKETCHES OF OUR TOWN						
10:30 AM	HISTORYLANDS						
11:00 AM	COMBAT					ANCIENT HISTORY	HISTORY OF WAR
11:30 AM							
12:00 PM	TURNING POINTS OF HISTORY						
12:30 PM							
1:00 PM	HISTORY ON FILM					DOCUMENTARIES	DOCUMENTARIES
1:30 PM							
2:00 PM						WESTERN MATINEE	HISTORY ON FILM
2:30 PM							
3:00 PM							
3:30 PM	SPIES						
4:00 PM	DESTINATION: HISTORY						
4:30 PM							
5:00 PM	COMBAT					WORLD'S BEST MINI-SERIES	TREASURE SEEKERS
5:30 PM							
6:00 PM	IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY						BATTLE STRIPES
6:30 PM	TRUE ACTION ADVENTURES						BATTLE STRIPES
7:00 PM	A SCATTERING OF SEEDS					GREAT TRAIN STORIES	TREASURE SEEKERS
7:30 PM	HISTORYLANDS						
8:00 PM	TURNING POINTS OF HISTORY					CROWN AND COUNTRY	DOCUMENTARIES
8:30 PM						CROWN AND COUNTRY	
9:00 PM	20TH CENTURY MONDAYS	ANCIENT HISTORY TUESDAYS	CANADIAN HISTORY WEDNESDAYS	HISTORY OF WAR THURSDAYS	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM
9:30 PM							
10:00 PM							
10:30 PM							
11:00 PM	TOUR OF DUTY						
11:30 PM							
12:00 AM	20TH CENTURY MONDAYS	ANCIENT HISTORY TUESDAYS	CANADIAN HISTORY WEDNESDAYS	HISTORY OF WAR THURSDAYS	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM
12:30 AM							
1:00 AM							
1:30 AM							
2:00 AM	TOUR OF DUTY						
2:30 AM							
3:00 AM	A CENTURY OF CONFLICT					CROWN AND COUNTRY	BATTLE STRIPES
3:30 AM						CROWN AND COUNTRY	BATTLE STRIPES
4:00 AM	TRUE ACTION ADVENTURES					WESTERN MOVIE	DOCUMENTARIES
4:30 AM	SPIES						
5:00 AM	COMBAT						SENSE OF HISTORY
5:30 AM							ORIGINS
6:00 AM	A CENTURY OF CONFLICT						CABLE IN THE CLASSROOM
6:30 AM							

Program changes may occur.